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King of DENMARK.

A

TRAGEDY.

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By a YOUNG GENTLEWOMAN.

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Dramatis Personæ.

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THEODORICK, *King of Denmark.*

HAROLD, *a secret Villain, a great Pretender.*

HELI, *a disaffected Captain.*

OSMIN, *a young Lord, related to the Queen.*

SOHEMUS, *Governor of the Castle.*

HERMANFOY, *King of Sweden.*

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ILDERGERTE, *Queen of Denmark.*

BELIZA, *Daughter to Harold.*

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THEODORICK,

King of DENMARK.

A C T I.

S C E N E, D E N M A R K.

HELI, HAROLD *at a Distance.*

HELI.

CURSE on Dependence: It seems fair, yet
starves
My warmest Hopes. -- The animating Fire,
Which burn'd so fiercely once, and spurr'd me on
To glorious Action, is now quench'd within me. —
Has not that coy and fickle Mistress, Fortune,
Eager to change, and wavering as the Wind,
Been constant still to me? — Whene'er I led
Th'embattled Troops to War, auspicious Victory
Perch'd on my Crest; and crown'd my Arms with
Triumph.

Why am I then thus treated with Disdain,
My Power supplanted, and my Fame dishonour'd?
Striplings and beardless Boys tread on my Heels,

A

And

And mount to Generals. — But they are bred in
Courts,

And fawning is their Trade. — In servile Courtesy
They cringe, and basely stoop to the vile Office
Of abject Flattery. Thus they sooth the Queen,
Hang on her Smiles, and all her Motions wait.
I am not fit for Courts. My honest Soul
Disdains to bend my Knee in feign'd Obedience,
Or speak a Language foreign to my Thoughts.
My only Hopes are here. — This Steel must help me :
This must redress my Wrongs. — For I'm a Soldier,
And am not yet worn out. — 'Tis true I'm scarr'd :
But still these Arms have Strength to wield a Sword.
Come then, thou faithful Partner of my Toils,
For sure, as yet the Rust hath not confin'd thee ;
Exert thy keenest Edge, whilst reeking Malice,
And that foul Fiend, Revenge, inspire my Thoughts
With Desolation, Rapine, Blood and Slaughter.
I've no low Game in View ; 'tis *Osmin*, *Osmin*,
That tow'ring Eagle, who now soars above me. —
Ha ! *Harold* here ! Curse on my hasty Temper
That has betray'd me.

SCENE II.

HAROLD, HELI.

HAROLD.

Heli, I have heard
Your just Complaint, and am rejoic'd to find,
You'll wreak your Vengeance on the Man I hate,
Then know me for your Friend.

HELI.

Can I believe you ?
No : You're a Courtier, and have liv'd within
That fatal Circle long, where gilded Smiles
Enchant a Man to Ruin. O ! there's Magick
In the base Sunshine of a Court ; for there
Each venom'd Insect, to draw in th' Unwary,

Display

Display their gaudy Plumes, soften their Looks,
And with a Tongue that charms the Ear, they dress
Their Words in Friendship, and pretended Love :
But all are canker'd to the inmost Core.

HAROLD.

Behold one here that's sound when *Heli* calls ;
I'm Proof for any Thing that serves our Purpose.

HELI.

Let me embrace thee ; from this Hour we're one.
Then tell me, *Harold*, and without Disguise,
(For thou hast known my Valour, and been Witness
To all my Toils) should *Theodorick* thus
Requite my Cares, when eager for the Charge,
I led his conquering Legions to the Field,
And brought them back with Triumph and Renown ?
O *Harold* ! had my base degenerate Soul
Refus'd the Combat, and my dastard Blood
E'er chill'd with Horror at th' approaching Fight ;
Or had I meanly sculk'd behind the Ranks,
Or turn'd my Back on the pursuing Foe,
Then should I not repine : But Heav'n and you
Can witness for me, with what ardent Zeal,
And gen'rous Eagerness, I met the Foe ;
With what undaunted Courage I rush'd on,
And courted Danger, where she most defy'd me.

HAROLD.

No more : I know you valiant, and have seen you,
When you engag'd amidst th' assembled Force
Of armed Foes, and broke their foremost Ranks ;
Fierce as the Thunder-Storm's impetuous Rage,
When the wing'd Lightning blasts the rip'ning Corn,
You rang'd the Field. — Pale Fear, and dire Dismay,
Wide-spreading Desolation,
And all the Ministers of furious War,
March'd on before you.

HELI.

Oh ! ungrateful Prince !
Because against the Queen I once was loud,
And in that Faction shew'd my steady Zeal,
The haughty Monarch never will forgive.

His royal Father wou'd not thus have us'd me ;
 He knew my Worth, and knowing, did reward :
Theodorick, unmindful of my Service,
 Has cast me off, and in my Stead preferr'd
 A beardless Boy, the Shadow of a Man,
 Whose feeble Sinews scarce can wield a Sword,
 Whose soft and tender Limbs wou'd sink beneath
 The pond'rous Mail : ——— One, fitter for a Page,
 To trace the Lab'rinth of the circling Dance,
 And not to tread the bloody Paths of War :
 To listen to the soft lascivious Lute,
 That summons to the Revels ; not to mark
 The sprightly Trumpet, when it sounds to Arms :
 To joke and quibble at the thoughtless Feast,
 Where Peals of endless Laughter rend the Hall,
 And not to mingle with the stern Alarms
 Of vig'rous War, when the confused Groans
 Of Men now lab'ring in the Pangs of Death,
 With various Cries assail th'astonish'd Ear.
 And must I be the Ball of Fortune now,
 For Boys to tofs and sport with as they list ?
 As *Heli* lives, this Sword shall do him Justice,
 Avenge him on his Foes.

HAROLD.

Be calm and hear me ?

HELI.

Calm, *Harold* ! Sure you mean to mock my Patience !

Try if thy Power can stop the rushing Wind,
 Bind up it's Fury, and divert the Storm :
 Go, bid the raging Billows cease to roar ;
 Divert the rav'nous Tyger from his Prey ;
 And rend the sucking Lion from its Dam :
 Let savage Wolves at thy Command forget
 Their stubborn Nature, and like Spaniels fawn :
 Then may you make me calm. — O *Harold, Harold*,
 Thou hast already known my Wound : Attempt
 To probe no farther, for the Pain's acute :
 Now be my Friend, and find a quick Relief.

HAROLD.

HAROLD.

Too soon have you resigned your Commission :
At this Time, it would greatly serve our Ends,
Wou'd you accept?—

HELI.

Accept? Accept of what?

Urge me no more, thou Trifler, but declare
Thyself my Foe : Fool that I was, or sure
I might have seen you could not feel for me.
Secure you sit, fix'd on the topmost Point,
The highest Pinnacle of Power ; to thee,
Fortune's sole Idol all must bow, who hope
T'enjoy that stately Pageantry of Honour.

HAROLD.

In this thou art short-sighted : Hear me speak ;
You soon will find that I expos'd lie
To th'impending Storm ; the Cloud that shadows you,
Will soon eclipse me too :—'Tis *Ildergerte*,
The beauteous Queen, whose Ears are always open,
When *Osmin* sues. And she is the sole Hinge
On which all Actions turn : She only sways
The Soul of our deluded *Theodorick*.
There was a Time, my Council has been sought,
And when I spoke, with mute Attention hush'd,
Each meddling Fool, each noisy Knave of State
Hung on my Tongue, and Opposition ceas'd.
But now this rising Hero (Curfes blast
His forward Virtues, and too rip'ning Fame)
Already has ta'en Root in ev'ry Breast,
And shoots aloft so fast, his mighty Deeds
Keep us all struggling under : This 'nstant
'Tis confirm'd, the *Swedes* are fled before him ;
Soon, too soon, will he return with Triumph ;
On me thy Wrongs sit heavy as my own.
Wou'd it not grieve the most obdurate Heart,
To see him gather Lawrels you first planted ?
Tho' Vict'ry crown'd the Skirmish that he fought,
Was it not Rashness, *Heli* ? Surely 'twas,
And hot-brain'd Youth : Or, who against such Odds
Would out have sallied, or have led so small

A handful to engage a numerous Host?
 His frantick Valour is a contagious
 Fever, all the Camp th' Infection caught,
 Rashly swore with him, to die or conquer.
 He's now the People's Idol, and the
 Shouting Rabble cry, *Osmin*, *Osmin*, the Deliverer.

HELI.

Do you then think I am that abject Slave!
 T'accept the Gleanings of a War! or gather
 The straggling Ears when he has reap'd the Harvest.

HAROLD.

No: I wou'd find you better Work than this,
 To lop this Cedar ere it reach the Clouds.

HELI.

Or spoil his Growth by fapping him——But that
 I would not wait——I cannot brook Delay.
 Keen is the Appetite of my Revenge:
 I'll glut it with his Blood; this Sword shall end him.

HAROLD.

What, to be forc'd to fly like a base Coward,
 Or die ignoble by the Hangman's Hands,
 An idle Spectacle for gaping Fools.
 O shallow Policy of hasty Soldiers!
 I hate him worse than you, but with more Cunning.
 (Would he could die a thousand, thousand Deaths)
 But ere our Plot is ripe, it must have Time
 To grow; we must abuse the credulous King,
 And fill him with Suspicions; *Osmin* must
 Be deem'd a Traytor, and the Queen remov'd.

HELI.

Ah! I now understand you. But you form
 Such monstrous Births, you never will be able
 To bring them forth.

HAROLD.

Oh! ne'er fear Abortion;
 For know she stands not on the firmest Basis:
 Others there are whose uncontrouled Spirits,
 Disdain Obedience to an upstart Queen,
 Whose base-born Blood ill suits her high Authority:
 This must fomented be: The People taught

How

How much a Match with *Sweden* would support
 Their Dignity and Power : When thus divided,
 The Stream will run not half so strong against us ;
 We may reap Advantage from the Malecontents :
 On *Osmin* must the Plot be laid. You know,
Theodorick lives but in his People,
 Nor can he bear a Rival in their Hearts :
 When *Osmin* is made safe, (as soon he shall be)
 The *Swedes* will then redoubl'd Courage get,
 (As yet their Number far surpasses ours)
 Elate their Hearts, and flush'd with Hopes of Conquest,
 Whilst we——
 Worn out with Toils, and spent with nightly Watch-
 ings,

Unable to maintain a ling'ring Siege :
 Nor are the promis'd Succours yet arriv'd.
 At Home, the People's Patience is exhausted,
 And every Tongue cries out for Peace :
 Bare-fac'd Sedition stalks along the Streets,
 And Discontent sits low'ring on each Brow :
 To lay the Storm, and lull the factious Crowd,
 The King for Peace must sue on any Terms.

HELI.

How stand the *Swedes* affected ? Are not they
 Averse to Peace, and still inclin'd to War ?

HAROLD.

Unknown unto the King, I have already
 With *Rosalinda* treated, who, I know,
 Is firmly ours : For when the Chance of War
 (In *Fred'rick's* Reign) and your resistless Arm
 Made her our Captive once ; her tender Heart
 Was fir'd with Love, burn'd for *Theodorick* :
 Well I remember, when departing hence,
 She took her solemn Leave of *Theod'rick*,
 (For I was present at the Interview)
 The lively Blood which purpled o'er her Cheek,
 Chill'd in it's Channels, and forgot to flow,
 Then with new Warmth returning, flush'd her Face
 With conscious Blushes, and betray'd her Passion
 Which as she strove to smother and conceal,

The more reveal'd ; while Modesty and Love,
Within her Bosom, wag'd a doubtful Conflict.

HELI.

But has not Time and Absence, those dire Foes
To Love's soft Passion, quench'd her former Flame ?

HAROLD.

No : I have learn'd, ('tis from a faithful Spy)
That earnestly she presses *Hermanfoy*,
To give her to the Arms of *Theod'rick*.
And he already had with *Osmin* treated,
When lo ! the King with Scorn the Terms rejected.

HELI.

You may as well Mount *Ætna* hope to shake,
As *Theod'rick's* Love for *Ildergerte*,
For he is bound by her superior Charms.
Gods ! what is Beauty but a fatal Snare !
There's Witchcraft in it's Charms that quite unman's
us !

Locks up the Faculties of every Soul.
E'en I, who hate the Queen, revere her Beauty ;
And, like a glowing Taper, I have caught
The radiant Flame, that kindl'd from her Eyes,
That sparkle like two Stars in Midnight's Frost,
And only shine to let us know our Distance.
Could we pull her down from that aspiring Height,
So much is *Theodorick* wrapp'd in her,
'Twould cause a Revolution great enough,
To pluck the royal Diadem from his Brow,
And place it on a worthier——Upon *Harold*——

HAROLD.

A Revolution ! It is scarce a Cent'ry,
Since it depriv'd my Ancestors of one.
Is *Theodorick* then so firmly seated,
As never to be shaken, never moved ?
No, surely : Tho' the fickle Goddess, Fortune,
Has plac'd him on the Summit of her Wheel,
Yet has she only dragg'd him to the Top,
To throw him down again with greater Force.
When *Theodorick* falls, all Obstacles
Surmounted, cease ; for Kings, like sturdy Oaks

On

On Mountain Tops, which wint'ry Storms tear up,
Fall not alone, but crush the humble Shrubs,
That grow beneath their Shade. So too must *Osmin*,
With *Ildergerte*, and all her pamper'd Train
Of haughty Courtiers fall with *Theodorick*.
When these are once suppress'd, I then again
May rear my Head, and see my Branches flourish.
That you may know how near you are my Heart,
I here do give *Beliza* to your Arms,
And she's a Gift, no Monarch need despise;
(Tho' I'm her Father, I may justly say)
Her Beauty's fam'd, descended of a Race,
Noble as theirs, that now the Sceptre sway.

HELI.

My Lord, I thank you: Long, in Secret, I've
Languish'd for the Maid, and look'd on her
With wishing Eyes: She's a Jewel, that gives
E'en Lustre to a Court, and much deserves
To wear the regal Diadem.

HAROLD.

Deserves!

By Heav'ns, my Son, (for now I'll call you so)
A Crown shall be her Dow'r, if you will follow.
What I advise, (accept of a Commission)
By this the Soldiers Hearts you may engage.
The Mariner, wou'd he reach the wish'd-for Port,
Must sail the nearest Seas, but once arriv'd
The blissful Haven, he ne'er thinks on Gulfs,
Nor dreads the Peril of tempestuous Seas.

HELI.

Like adverse Qualities, I war within,
Renown and Honour, with Ambition strive,
And I must stoop to ask for what my Pride
Forbids, because I'd gratify my Pride:
A Paradox, my Lord, I can't explain.
Nor will I ever basely cringe and sue
For cramp'd Authority, and controuled Pow'r;
There is no other Way I know to gain it.

HAROLD.

HAROLD.

You need not rack your Brain to find the Means,
This can I do easily, for as yet,
I have not lost all Int'rest with the King :
But see, he comes : What Measures shall we take ?

HELI.

I wou'd avoid him : Manage for the best. [Exit.

S C E N E III.

THEODORICK, ILDERGERTE, HAROLD, &c.

THEODORICK.

Was not that *Heli*, who now parted hence ?
His hasty Strides to shun me, shews him conscious
Of his late Fault, that I too easy pardoned :
For he's still buzzing like a Summer Fly,
To blow the People up with fell Sedition,
Which soon may rip'n into foul Rebellion ;
If not suppressed by our timely Care,
Henceforth hold no Speech, nor converse with him,
Left you be deem'd a Traytor base as *Heli*.

HAROLD.

Oh spare to brand me with so vile a Name :
My much-lov'd royal Master, had I one Drop
Of Blood, that's tainted with Disloyalty,
This Sword should make a Sluice to let it out,
Tho' Life itself should issue at the Wound.

THEODORICK.

Forgive my Rashness I believe thee honest :
In Faith of that, have made thee Partner
Of all my Cares, and plac'd thee near my Heart.
My Hours of Pleasure too you share, when tired
With the Fatigue of Business, I forgot
My Royalty, and laid aside my State,
That with more Ease I might converse with thee.
I then conjure thee, (if of Worth you hold
My Favour) tell me (nor disguise the Truth
With the false Gloss and Colour of Deceit)
What *Heli* did to you communicate.

HAROLD.

HAROLD.

But that you bid me, I shou'd ne'er presume
 To grate your Royal Ear, with Sounds so harsh
 As *Heli's* Name.—No : rather let my Tongue
 Forget to speak, than thus abuse its Power.
 For you have shed your choicest Influence,
 Like Heav'n, have show'r'd repeated Blessings on me,
 Expecting no Return but Gratitude.
 When I'm ungrateful, may my better Stars
 Forsake me ; and you to make me wretched,
 Withdraw the friendly Beams that glad my Soul.
 Then like a drooping Flower should I hang
 My with' red Head, and languish out my Life
 As *Heli* does. On your Command I venture,
 (If possible I can) but I want Words
 T' express the Anguish of his tortur'd Soul.
 I found him ruminating on his Griefs,
 And sighing to himself. He call'd me to him ;
 When, as I came, he seiz'd me by the Hand,
 And in pathetic Silence press'd it hard.
 Thrice he essay'd to vent his Griefs, and thrice
 His heaving Breast with interrupting Sighs
 Choak'd up the Passage, and deny'd them Utterance.
 At length his Words found way, when thus he spoke :
 O *Harold, Harold*, I have wrong'd my Sovereign ;
 But by yon Heaven I swear, I'd rather die,
 Than languish out a loathsome wretched Life
 In his Displeasure.—
 At this a Pause ensued : Nor could he more ;
 The falt'ring Accents dy'd upon his Tongue.
 His swimming Eyes no longer could contain,
 And the big Drops came trick'ling down his Face
 In manly Sorrows : Such was his Distress,
 So great his Woe, my Heart was touch'd with Pity.
 A silent Tear stole softly down my Cheek,
 And sympathetic Sadness seiz'd my Soul.
 At length he earnestly entreated me,
 That I would be his Advocate to you.
 I long declin'd, at last was overcome,
 (Knowing your Clemency) by his Persuasion :

And

And gave my Word, that I would move his Suit,
 When first Occasion should present itself,
 Despairing when to find a proper Time.
 But now your Majesty has drawn it from me
 Sooner, than ev'n my Wishes could have hop'd for.

THEODORICK.

I doubt him much, he doth repent so soon:
 Hypocrisy's the Growth of ev'ry Soil,
 Gilds the base Knave, doth make him pass for current,
 And unsuspected by our easy Nature.

ILDERGERTE.

But while the Cheat's conceal'd, the Royal Stamp
 Adds Dignity, and Value to the Metal.
 It is of equal Worth, 'till it be try'd:
 Then who on bare Suspicion would suppress it:
 If 'tis found Gold, we joy we've made a Trial,
 If it prove nought, then let it be defaced.
 Let me prevail then with you, my kind Lord,
 To make a Trial of him, for perhaps
 O'ercome by your Indulgence, he may have
 A grateful Soul, and fraught with upright Thoughts.

HAROLD.

He own'd that Passion harrow'd up his Soul,
 And drove his Reason from her wonted Throne;
 But your late gen'rous Treatment call'd her back,
 Where now secure she reigns, nor will he more offend.

THEODORICK.

Were his Repentance but sincere,
 I could forgive.——'Tis true he touch'd me in
 A tender Part, to rob me of my People;
 But his Repentance for his Fault atones.
 Then let him know, that Mercy ne'er was yet
 A Stranger to the Bosom of *Theodorick*.

[Harold offers to go.]

ILDERGERTE.

Yet, stay, my Lord, and hear me once more speak,
 And farther plead in his Behalf: I hope
 My gracious Lord will grant him his Commission,
 That he may know you more than pardon him.
 We still must own, despite of all his Crimes,
 His well-try'd Valour and undaunted Courage,

Claim

Claim some regard, and merit a Remembrance.

THEODORICK.

His Honour's fully'd with Sedition,
Yet upon your Request I will restore him:
Then mark him well, I say, if aught in him
You can discern that looks like his late Fault;
Observe the inward Workings of his Soul,
And bring us Word how he receives our Favour.

HAROLD.

I know him well, and by the Light of Time,
Have kenn'd him thro' and thro', nor is he hard
To fathom, I will sound him,——
And dive into the Bottom of his Soul. [Exit.]

ILDERGERTE.

May he be just, as you are merciful.

THEODORICK.

Oh! thou fair Pattern of excelling Nature,
That can forgive your most invet'rate Foe!
And in a Moment thus could bend my Soul
To Thoughts of Peace, and melt me to Compassion.
O *Ildergerte*, in you is center'd all
We ask of Heav'n, and wish of Joys below:
To clasp you thus is more than mortal Bliss!
O Woman! lovely Woman! when Nature made you,
Admiring Angels gazing stood to see
The wond'rous Work! and cry'd, the Gods are partial,
Thus to deprive our Mansions of such Lustre,
And give to Earth that beauteous fair Creation.

ILDERGERTE.

My better Half, my Soul, and Life of all
My Joys, my Heart is full of Love and thee:
And there I fain would have them dwell, till Time
Shall shake this earthly Fabrick into Dust.——
But Heav'n avert those Fears that haunt my Soul.

THEODORICK.

Banish thy Fears, and give them to the Winds,
What can e'er drive me from my native Home,
Where Dove-like Softness sooths my Soul to rest?
Th' enchanting Music of thy Tongue steals on
My Sense, and lulls my Cares in downy Sweets.

ILDER-

ILDERGERTE.

Forgive my Fears, they're caused by my Love.
 (For who can tell what evil Times produce)
 For should I lose thee? — Oh! — my *Theodorick*,
 But there it smarts! —
 I cannot, cannot tell the Shock!

THEODORICK.

Then cease thy bitter Wailings, for in vain
 Shall Fortune knit her angry Brow on us:
 Not all the cruel Malice of our Foes,
 Not even greedy Death shall part us, since kind
 Heav'n

By Sympathy of Soul has made us one;
 If first thou'rt called, I'll follow thee so close,
 That we'll together mount, and mix as bright,
 As Flames ascending from the purest Fires.
 See *Harold* comes. — [*Harold returns.*] Say, how did
Heli

Receive our gracious Pardon and Forgiveness?

HAROLD.

My Impatience caught him ere he'd reach'd the
 Gate.

And when I told the welcome News, his Eyes
 Distill'd with Joy; nay, so brim full he was,
 It choak'd his Words: At last his grateful Thanks
 Found way, altho' in broken Accents. And to
 Give a farther Proof of his Sincerity,
 He promis'd to discover the late Plot.

Enter MESSENGER.

MESSENGER.

An Express from the Camp desires Admittance.

THEODORICK.

Let him find Entrance. [*Enter Express.*]
 Speak — What Tidings bring you?

EXPRESS.

Oswin is near, he best can tell.

THEODORICK.

Say what you know, impatience fires my Heart.

EXPRESS

EXPRESS.

Gladness will reign in every Heart, to hear
 What mighty Things are done !
 The Foe, who late were flush'd with Joy,*
 For their late Conquest of our frontier Towns,
 Supine at ease, lay stretch'd within their Tents,
 Nor dreamt of Harm design'd to cross our March,
 Before the promis'd Succours were arriv'd.
 Which *Osmin* hearing, (from a Spy he sent
 To view their Camp) prepar'd to give them battle,
 But (Fortune for a Time uncertain) some Wretch
 Gave them Intelligence, before we could
 Arrived, they were all drawn out to meet us :
 But in such Disorder, their Swords dealt Ruin
 On themselves ; but soon were rally'd, and long
 The Chance of War was doubtful, till *Osmin*,
 With redoubl'd Courage, broke their foremost Ranks,
 Their General unhors'd, his Fury like
 A flaming Meteor shot ; And——
 But I want Words to tell the Wonders he perform'd !
 For soon the Plain was heap'd with Mountains
 Of the Dead, prisoners of great Note, their Number
 Scarce yet known, that fell beneath his fatal Sword.

THEODORICK.

By Heaven 'twas Conduct worthy of a God.

[*flourish.*]

But hark ! the Hero comes.

[*A Shout, an Osmin ! an Osmin.*]

S C E N E IV.

THEODORICK, ILDERGERTE, HAROLD, OSMIN,
 Guards, &c.

[*Osmin kneels to kiss the King's Hand.*]

THEODORICK.

Arise, my best, my most beloved *Osmin* ;
 That Posture ill becomes a Conqueror.
 Thus, I join my Hand with yours in friendly
 Transport,

Transport, and bid thee rise to Joy.——
But where are the Slaves, that Grace thy Triumph?

O S M I N.

The Prisoners follow at a distance;
Those Men, whom Chance of War has made our
Captives:

'Tis true they fell; (but nobly) for long
They brav'd our sharpest Steel, therefore deserve
Better Treatment, than grinding of their Teeth
With Dust, that rises from my Chariot Wheels:
For who can tell in Fate's unequal Scales,
How soon the Ballance yet may turn, and I
Become the Vanquish'd, they the Vanquishers.

H A R O L D.

Now must I cloak the Malice of my Heart
With fair dissembling, and endearing Terms. (*aside.*
Auspicious Heaven protect thy early Fame,
And crown thy forward Virtues with renown.
Since by the guardian Prowess of thy Arms,
Our free-born Rights, our dearest Liberties,
Are all preserv'd from lawless Usurpation,
Licentious Conquest, and unjust Invasion.

T H E O D O R I C K.

Thy matchless Feats already have been told us,
And their bright Fame has reach'd our Court before
thee:

Now we will spare the Trouble of recital,
For soon we must prepare us to receive,
The People's Compliments on this Occasion.
Then know, this Day we dedicate to Joy,
Nor let one Cloud of black Despair be seen,
But ev'ry Voice with loudest Acclamation,
Send up to Heaven their Joy, and shout around,
'Till the repeated Echoes ring our Triumph.
With so much Courage, so much Conduct join'd,
May ev'ry Monarch such a Gen'ral find. [*Exeunt.*
[*Manet* Harold.

H A R O L D.

And all your Prayers be scatter'd in the Wind.
Virtue avault, to Cottages be gone,

Not

Not id'ly play the Haunt in Courts and Palaces,
With Conscience thy Companion, that vain Phantom,
Which trading Priests rais'd up to fright the World,
And make us bribe for Heav'n. There's no Heav'n
for me.

Unless I cease to think, I must be wretched :
For, to despair, is Wretchedness enough !
And my curs'd Fortune darts no Ray of Hope,
That *Ildergerte* to me, will e'er prove kind,
How long must I conceal this Flame to scorch me ?
I have a Soul could brave the worst of Fate,
And quiet all her Storms, but those within.
Sure all my artful Schemes won't prove in vain,
For some at length, must break this gauling Chain ;
Or I will force her to my Arms, and ease my Pain. }

The End of the First Act.

B

A C T

A C T II.

S C E N E I.

HAROLD *and* BELIZA.

HAROLD.

BEGONE!——I'll hear no more ; then cease
 to urge me ;
 Left I shou'd spurn thee off, and quite forget
 I ever was thy Parent.

BELIZA.

Oh, my Father !
 May I yet call you by that tender Name ;
 Why knit you thus your wrinkl'd Brow in Wrath,
 Which wounds my Heart, and fills my Breast with
 Anguish.

HAROLD.

Have I not rear'd thee like a tender Plant,
 And plac'd thee next my Heart, to grow and flourish
 The Flow'r of all my Hopes? For what? To see you
 Despoil'd, and gather'd by the rude Hand of one
 My Soul abhors. Thou weep'st ; I see thou dost,
 And know for whom you'd drain those Sluices dry.
 Tears flow in vain to plead for plighted Vows,
 Where my Command has Pow'r to cancel them :
 Our Children are their Father's Property ;
 Nor have they right, thus to dispose themselves :
 Then mark me well ; if thou art froward still,
 And give thy Hand to seal this hated Contract,
 And wed with *Osmin*, I will cut thee off,
 And graft my Love upon another Stock ;

No

No more remember, that I had a Daughter ;
Therefore *Beliza*, on my Blessing, once
Again I charge thee, never see him more.

BELIZA.

Oh, hear me ! And let Pity plead my Cause :
Since my mistaken Vows have wrought this Error ;
(Nor judg'd my tender Flame would move thine Ire,) Now cannot be recall'd, (for Heav'n has heard them)
Therefore, with bended Knees, and streaming Eyes,
I beg you to revoke your harsh Command,
And my whole Life's devoted to Obedience.

HAROLD.

On these Terms you may see him once again ;
But let it be to take thy last Adieu ;
For know, that e'er To-morrow's Sun descends
Behind yon Hill, it lights you to your Nuptials :
Heli's the only Man I have thought worthy :
Nay, do not start, for he shall be my Son ;
If not thy Husband, I will make him Heir,
To all my Fortunes, and Affections too.
Would you then calm my Anger, give a Proof
Of your late promis'd Duty, and no longer
Be Refractory to my Will ; for if
Thy stubborn Heart persist, expect to see,
My kindled Rage blaze forth, and quite destroy,
The last Remains of Tenderneſs within me.
Think, think of that, or be prepar'd to meet,
The heaviest Curses, that an injur'd Father
Can show'r upon thy Head. (Exit.

BELIZA.

Oh, stay one Moment,
And hear a wretched Daughter plead.—He's gone.
(Pausing.

He bid me think ; but fain I'd turn me from
That dreadful Prospect ; (wou'd to Heav'n I could)
For oh ! behold a Groupe of dismal Thoughts
Arise, that crowd so fast upon my Soul,
They weigh me down, to Misery and Ruin.
Oh ! that some gentle Power would now assist me,
And lead me thro' this Labyrinth of Woe !

For, let me turn on either Side, I'm lost.
 My Father, 'till this Hour, was ever kind ;
 But now his Wrath shoots bearded Arrows on me ;
 And while he Frowns, the Wound admits no cure.
(Lays her Hand on her Breast.)

Here Justice reigns, and pleads for plighted Love,
 Giv'n e'er my Youth had Cunning to deceive :
 E'en now I find how hard 'tis to dissemble ;
 For shou'd he come, he'd see my bleeding Heart,
 And yet, I would not have him think me false :
 Methinks, (so much I dread the dire Encounter)
 I almost wish no more to see my *Osmín* ;
 Ah ! there's the Rock that staggers all my Reason ;
 For now I find how ill I can support it.
 Oh *Osmín* ! *Osmín* ! — Save me, Heav'n ! He's here.

Enter OSMÍN.

OSMÍN.

Behold him here, and much your Beauty's Slave ;
 Turn not away, my Fair, but give one Glance
 From those bright Eyes, whose Influence has Pow'r
 To make me blest'd : Oh, be thou the Oracle !
 To sign my Death, or crown my Vows with Bliss.

BELIZA.

Tho' I am caught in this unguarded Hour,
 I wou'd not have him see these falling Tears. *(aside.)*

OSMÍN.

She hears not, minds not, are my Eyes deceived,
 Or is that lovely Form, the Shadow of *Beliza*.

BELIZA.

I wou'd I were a Shade ; for then from thee
 I should not be divided, but unseen
 Would follow to the Wars, there watch the Safety,
 And while you Slumber, hover o'er thy Tent,
 And guard thee from the Perils of the Night.
 But now we meet to part : — I can no more.

OSMÍN.

No ; rather let it die upon your Lips,
 And thus be blest'd ! and hold you thus for ever.

BELIZA.

BELIZA.

Osmin, forbear: Oh! shou'd my Father see you,
Involv'd in certain Ruin both would fall.

OSMIN.

Why dost thou start, and fly me thus, thy self
Is a sufficient Guard; nor need there Men,
Or Angels, to protect the Temple, where
Such Honour dwells. Oh! when did e'er my Passion
Transport me to an Act, thy strictest Virtue
Cou'd ever blame. I scorn the base Design.

BELIZA.

Oh! Do not wrong my Meaning; could you see
My Heart, not one severe, ungen'rous Thought,
Is lurking there, to chide thee with Dishonour.
But, oh! my cruel Father's harsh Command,
Enjoins me never to behold thee more,
No longer therefore must you think on me.

OSMIN.

Not think on thee! Impossible! O *Beliza*!
It doubly wounds me, thus to hear thee tell it:
Had but the dearest Friend I have on Earth
Pronounc'd this Doom, I'd flown with eager Haste
To meet thy Charms; but had they stood athwart
My Way, this Sword would soon have made a Passage.
But sure *Beliza* never will forsake me?

BELIZA.

Believe me! (And I need not call for Heav'n
To witness) Oh! believe me, *Osmin*, when
I blushing, tell you, I am only yours,
Oh! I would tell thee all, had I but Time;
But soon my cruel Father will return:
Let me conjure you then, by your known Love,
If you wou'd see me once again, depart.

OSMIN.

Oh! Do not bid me go, to leave behind
The richest Treasure of my Soul, expos'd
To beating Tempests, and impetuous Storms.
No: Here will I anchor, here I will remain,
I'm strongly fetter'd by thy soft Enchantment.

BELIZA:

BELIZA.

Oh! Do not rashly thus resolve my Ruin :
 For should my Father's waken'd Wrath continue,
 My trembling Heart wou'd never beat to rest ;
 And sure my *Osmín* would not make me wretched ?

OSMIN.

By all my Love, there's not a Bribe, I swear,
 Cou'd ever make me Author of thy Woe :
 Were those bright Orbs, that deck the Sky, all Worlds,
 And could be purchas'd with one Tear of thine,
 They'd be too dearly bought, for at that Price,
 Immortal Gifts would all neglected Lye.
 But do not press me now, to leave you thus,
 In this uncertain State : For, oh ! My Soul
 Forebodes, I ne'er shall see thee more.
 Yet here thy Image will for ever live,
 No Time can e'er erase thee from my Heart.
 Then, like the Wretched, shall I mourn for Heav'n
 In view, when quite shut out from all its Joys.

BELIZA.

Oh! Do not thus abandon to Despair.
 I'll learn the Hour when some mild Planet reigns,
 Whose friendly Aspect moves us to Compassion ;
 Then will I softly steal into his Heart,
 With Pray'rs so gentle, and with Words so sweet,
 They shall not rouse one sleeping Passion there,
 But kindly woo my Father to our Wishes.

OSMIN.

O my kind Love! Thou art my better Genius,
 And darts a Ray of Hope to ease my Soul :
 Thy Softness sure might melt a savage Heart,
 And quite disarm its Fury. Then Heav'n send
 Success, and grant thy Words may move your Fa-
 ther's Soul.

BELIZA.

Alas, my *Osmín* ! We have staid too long,
 I hear my Father's Step : This Way let me conduct
 you. *(Exit, Osmín following.)*

SCENE

SCENE II.

HAROLD, and HELI.

HELI.

My Lord, I wish you had not seal'd my Peace,
On scurvy Terms like these: I could now despise it.

HAROLD.

What would you more, is not your Pardon sign'd,
Your Places, and your Pow'r fully restor'd?

HELI.

Oh! Name it not, a Viper's pois'nous Tooth
Bites not so keen; already the Infection
Is mingled with my Blood, which boils so high,
If soon it has not vent, th' extended Channels
Will burst. Nay, thus I'd rather die, than draw
One Moment's Breath dependant on the Queen.
Did not she pity me?—Ah!—thou answerest not:
I know she did:—She pity thee, poor Wretch.
Come, let me know how low I am reduced.

HAROLD.

Have I not told thee that she pleaded justly,
And much esteem'd the Merits of thy Sword.

HELI.

That Sword I'll try on *Osmi*, and the King:
Still, still, I say, this Sword must do the Business.
I like not plotting: 'Tis bad Architecture,
Where, if one Prop's misplac'd, the Building tumbles,
And with its Weight destroys the paltry Workman.
Now, if I fall, I shall not meanly perish;
The stately Fabrick of proud Monarchy,
Shall bury me in noble Ruins.

HAROLD.

But think how lately you escap'd the Snare.
From hence learn Prudence, and proceed with caution.
The

The King had destin'd you to fall a Sacrifice
To incens'd Power, had not my Entreaties,
With much Reluctance, wrung a Pardon from him.

HELI.

Pardon'd! By Heav'ns, that Sound wou'd taint the
Air.

What is this sacred Thing the People worship,
That with a Look can awe the trembling Crowd
A King! a Man! and so is *Heli* too,
So near of Kindred, by our Mother, Earth,
That, when to her return'd, we blended lie;
In that one common Mass distinction ends.
Say, who can then the Particles divide?
Or cry, suppose this is the Dust of great *Theodorick*?
Soon shall he mingle with the Earth.
Say, *Harold*? I stabb'd him in the Council-Room?

HAROLD.

Why ask you me? You say you are determin'd:
My Anger is too cold to join with your's. (*Ironically.*)

HELI.

Oh, bear with me: I know you mean me well,
But your Machine so slowly moves, I fear
The Springs will Rust, before we've gain'd our Point.

HAROLD.

I fear your hasty, and impetuous Temper
Will spoil our well premeditated Plot,
When now Mature, and baffle all our Schemes.

HELI.

Sure, if you are my Friend, you can forgive:
Believe it Constitution, and consider,
A Spark of Fire was mingled with my Blood,
Which you have Pow'r to quench, and make me
calm,
As Summer Seas, after a sudden Storm.

HAROLD.

Then now's the Trial: *Osmin* is your Rival.

HELI.

May Curses blast him, as he does my Hopes:
Still does he haunt me, like an evil Genius,
And crosses every Purpose of my Soul.

But

But here you only can deliver me.

HAROLD.

And will release you from an endless Train
Of anxious Hopes and Fears. The Lover absent,
The Flame burn'd dimly; but when once remov'd
Beyond all Hope, the Fire is quite extinguish'd.
Then from its Ashes will another rise,
And burn as bright for *Heli*. Already
I have prepar'd her to receive your Vows.

HELI.

But how did she approve?

HAROLD.

She has no Choice:
Is she not mine? I am now absolute,
And will be obey'd: Yet my Indulgence
Has giv'n her Leave once more to see him.

HELI.

If they embrace the Time, and get a Priest
To join their Hands in Wedlock's sacred Band——

HAROLD.

She dares not do it: Much she fears my Wrath.
Dire Curses I've denounc'd if she resist.
If yet she has not seen him, it soon will
Be too late; I've found Means that cannot fail,
But to secure him.

HELI.

How; which Way can it be done?

HAROLD.

You know, he from the Camp is now return'd
For fresh Supplies, and before many Suns are spent,
Designs to give them Battle: I have giv'n
The *Swedes* Intelligence. In Ambush now
They lie, behind the Wood, South of the Plain,
nearest
The Sea (that Pass gain'd, soon may their Troops
embark)
Which they have march'd all Night to reach, and thus
They will Surprize us, ere he take the Field:
Which will encrease the King's Suspicion;
And to confirm it stronger yet, I've added,

C

That

That his late Clemency had wrought so strongly
 Upon your grateful Temper, as to make you,
 A loyal Subject, from a faithless Traytor :
 And as a Witniess of your Proteftations,
 You promise to unravel the whole Scheme,
 And all the hidden Myft'ries of your Plot,
 Which must be laid on *Osmin's* hated Head.
 If the King wants a further Proof, behold this Letter,
 Which I have forg'd, the Counterfeit so like,
 It were impossible the nicest Eye
 Could know the Difference : From a Letter
 His Hand I copy'd, (that I did chance to find)
 Which he had sent *Feliza*, and by that
 His Love discover'd. ——— The King approaches :
 You know your Cue. ——— Stand bold, and we are safe.
 (Exeunt.)

S C E N E III.

KING, HAROLD, HELI, &c.

THEODORICK.

Heli, Say, what is it you'd discover ?

HELI.

Please you, that your Attendants be dismiss'd.

THEODORICK.

We Will, that all but *Harold* quit the Presence.

HAROLD.

He fears it will disturb your Majesty.

THEODORICK.

Think'st thou I am a Reed, that the least Breath
 Of Air can move : Not so ; for, in my self,
 Collected thus, as *Atlas* firm I stand.

HAROLD.

I wish I'd not engag'd in this Affair :
 Were I but sure, your royal Self were safe,
 I should recant : Heav'n knows how much I grieve
 To ruin one, the nearest to your Heart.

THE-

THEODORICK.

Ungrateful, treach'rous *Harold*! Wou'd you then
Protect your Master's most invet'rate Foe.
Something ill lurks beneath this Veil of Friendship,
Too black to bear the piercing Eye of Majesty;
But Justice soon shall bring it into Light.
Disguise not then the Truth, if ought you value
My future Quiet; but point out the Man.

HAROLD.

Then am I lost indeed, (tho' I'll obey my King)
Thus cast between two Rocks I'm sure to split;
If this I 'scape, the other, still in view,
I fear will wreck me: When I've told the Man
You'll scarce believe.

THEODORICK.

If you'd escape my Wrath,
Then let me know the Man, who first contriv'd
This treacherous Plot.

HAROLD.

Then know, 'twas *Osmin*.

THEODORICK.

Osmin! I'll not believe it: It is false as Hell,
As *Heli*, *Harold*. O most inhuman Traytors,
What Malice urg'd ye to contrive this Deed.

HAROLD.

I said, your Majesty wou'd not believe it.

THEODORICK.

Prove it, ye Traytors, or you both shall suffer.
Take heed, you mix not the least Grain of Falshood
With this your Story: No vile Cant, or Quibble,
To mask it with Evasions; can the Man
That fought thus resolutely for his Country,
Can he, I say, be false? Can Treason lurk
Beneath so fair a Semblance? surely no.

HAROLD.

He fought not for his King, nor Country's Cause,
But 'twas for *Osmin* only, who, I hope
Will be rewarded: *Heli* shew the Letter.

(*Heli gives the Letter, King reads.*)

Dear Heli,

I Have got the Victory, and with it the Hearts of the Soldiers, which is very conducive to our Design: I shall soon return from Camp, 'till then, be you industrious in our Affairs, and form as strong a Party as you can.

I am faithfully yours,

OSMIN.

HAROLD.

The Poison works: Behold! he's much disturb'd.

(*Aside to Heli.*)

THEODORICK.

What's here! A Postscript. (*continues to read.*)

P. S. Herman Foy has sent to treat; the Terms (*which at present cannot be accepted*) were to unite the jarring Crowns by an Alliance with Roselinda their Princess: When I am seated on the Throne, it may be done with Ease, (*I have no Wife to hinder*) and serve to fix me yet more firmly.

HAROLD.

You find, he treated too without your Knowledge.

THEODORICK.

'Tis false: I knew he did, and knew the Terms: It was my Order he should keep them secret.

HAROLD.

Then you may know, dread Sir, by this his Letter: Who else cou'd tell, what he alone cou'd know?

THEODORICK.

Perdition seize him! Shall this Shrub I've rais'd, Pretend to sway the royal Scepter now? It is determin'd: Death shall be his Doom: What tho' he be related to the Queen, Yet he has broken a much stronger Tie Than that of Blood; the sacred Band of Friendship.

(*Pauses.*)

HAROLD.

This is a lucky Thought, and goes as we wou'd have it, (*Aside.*)

THEO-

THEODORICK.

It must not, cannot be——If he's not true,
Then all is false ; Nature herself is false,
Who dress'd his Soul with her best tinsel Stuff,
But to deceive us : Not a Feature has he,
But speaks him honest. Yet I'll not condemn him,
But will confront him with this Evidence,
Which surely must alarm his guilty Soul :
Lo ! here he comes to clear himself.

SCENE IV.

*Enter OSMIN, and SOHEMUS, at one Door, QUEEN,
and BELIZA, at the other Door.*

THEODORICK.

Osmin, your Presence now is wanted.

OSMIN.

I came to know your Majesty's Command,
Before I took the Field, or fac'd the Foe.

THEODORICK.

Know you to whom this Letter does belong ?

BELIZA.

I fear it is the Letter that I lost,
It looks so like it.

(Aside.)

THEODORICK.

What say'st thou of *Osmin* ?

HAROLD.

If you, *Beliza*, Mercy hope to find,
Declare the whole you know, without Disguise.

BELIZA.

The Letter's mine : Without a blush I own
It came from *Osmin*,

HELI.

Confusion ! Yours——
Madam, 'tis *Osmin*'s.

OSMIN.

I know 'tis mine :

————— I glory that I wrote it.

THEO-

THEODORICK.

Glory, say you?

Take heed, rash Youth, lest you presume too far:
You know not what you say.

OSMIN.

I know, I wrote it.

Nor do I think it rash, or too Presumptuous,
To claim the Prize, whose Prospect fir'd my Heart
With Thirst of Praise, and led me to the Field.

THEODORICK.

'Tis enough: Guards, seize the harden'd Traytor,
Curse on my stupid Blindness, that so fast
Had seal'd my Eyes, I cou'd not then discern
The plainest Fact.

OSMIN.

Unhand me? I am no Traytor.

THEODORICK.

Thou art the foulest Traytor Earth e'er bred;
The most ungrateful Wretch, that Thought can form.

OSMIN.

Shew me the Man, that can, or dares to prove it.

THEODORICK.

There needs no other Witness, than thy self.

OSMIN.

Say when, or how? I'll not deny the Truth.

THEODORICK.

That's somewhat honest, for so base a Villain.
There, there thou'st done it; read but that black Scroll,
In Miniature, it shews thy hellish Character:
To paint thee all wou'd be a Prodigy.

OSMIN.

I find my Eye deceiv'd me: Now I come
To nearer View, I see 'tis not my Hand. *(reads to himself.)*

THEODORICK.

'Tis well; like *Proteus* you can change your Shape.

OSMIN.

Oh, horrid! It contains the foulest Treason,
That ever Eye beheld, or Heart conceiv'd.
What Fiend has Hell sent forth, to work my Ruin?

For

For sure, no Man on Earth was base enough
To pen this Scroll.

THEODORICK.

None, but thy self: Nor Earth,
Nor Hell, can shew us such another Monster.
I thought you'd been a Villain but by Halves,
And left a Corner of our Heart for Mercy,
But that you've lost, so much you're of a Piece
I find you've play'd the Rebel there, drove Mercy
From its antient Seat, but wou'd you catch it,
Ere it take wing, and soar beyond your Reach,
Shew some Remorse, confess your horrid Crime.

OSMIN.

Treason and I are Strangers — I am no Traytor.

THEODORICK.

Away with him: Be sure you guard him well:
Away; too long has he abus'd our Patience.

ILDERGERTE.

O, spare him, I conjure you, by the Band
Which join'd my Heart with thine; by all the Joys
I ever gave you, do not think him guilty.
Oh, give him time at least, 'tis all I ask:
Tho' now as black as Midnight's pitchy Veil
With Treason stain'd he seems, impartial Justice,
With white-rob'd Innocence, and Virgin-Truth,
Shall shew him purer, than the feather'd Snow.

THEODORICK.

Madam, forbear: The Treason is too plain.

ILDERGERTE.

It cannot be: That bold, undaunted Look;
Those Eyes that turn to Heaven invoke his Justice;
That Gesture, tho' 'tis awful, yet 'tis modest:
All prove him guiltless, and deny the Charge.

THEODORICK.

No more: It sounds ungrateful to my Ear.
Obey your Orders, Guards.

BELIZA.

Oh, fatal Error!
Oh, dire Mistake! What has my Rashness done?

OSMIN.

OSMIN.

Stand off, nor taint me with so foul a Touch;
I will not be compell'd by these rude Hands.

THEODORICK.

Vain is Resistance: *Sobemus*, take his Sword;
He is your Charge.

OSMIN.

By all my former Service,
Vouchsafe one Moment, and I'll not repine.
From you, I first receiv'd it, and to you
Alone I will resign it: There let it rest;

(Lays it at the King's Feet.)

Perhaps, when next I draw it, it may be
In your Defence. Now, *Sobemus*, I'm yours:
Conduct me to my Prison. *(Exeunt with Guards.)*

HAROLD.

Mark'd your Majesty,
With what prophetic Insolence he parted;
With Voice more harsh than Flights of croaking Ra-
vens:
Such bug-bear Omens frighten Villagers;
But never reach a Palace.

THEODORICK.

'Tis enough;
He is secur'd: I will not hear you now,
Dwell on his Guilt, and aggravate his Crime.

ILDERGERTE.

The Time has been, that I cou'd move your Pity;
But now you'll think me partial to my Race:
I dare not therefore be his Advocate.
Beliza now may try to sooth your Wrath.

BELIZA.

Grief choaks my Words: I cannot plead his Cause,
But if dumb Sorrow cou'd for Pardon sue,
Thus, on my bended Knees, I wou'd implore it.

HAROLD.

Hence from my Sight: How dare you, in my Pre-
sence,
Offend the King, in pleading for his Foe.
Forgive, dread Monarch, her mistaken Zeal,

And

And think not 'tis her Will that would offend.
But oh, impute it to her thoughtless Years,
And Youth, that for a Virtue, Vice mistakes.

THEODORICK.

Stay, *Harold*, do not too severely check her,
Pity's the Privilege of the Fair, a Gift
Bestow'd on them to charm us; 'tis the Magick,
That sweetly steals into the Heart, unknown;
And tempers all our Soul with soothing Softness.
Now 'tis ill timed, and therefore cannot reach;
Since fairest *Ildergerte* has fail'd to move me.

HAROLD.

'Tis strange, that *Ofmin*, Sir, whom you have
rear'd,
With a paternal Fondness and Endearment,
Shou'd prove a treach'rous Viper, thus to sting
That Bosom, which had warm'd him into Life.

THEODORICK.

Ay, that's the Scorpion strikes so deep a Wound.
A Foe I might forgive, but not a Friend.

BELIZA.

Oh! hear me yet?

THEODORICK.

Be dumb:—I'll hear no more.

BELIZA.

My Heart sinks in me! Tremblings seize my
Limbs,
And ev'ry slack'ning Nerve forsakes it's Office.
Madam, give me your Leave now to retire.

(*Aside to the Queen.*)

ILDERGERTE.

Stay yet a Moment: I have thought to go,
My Presence now can well be spar'd.
Forgive me, Sir, if one Thing more I ask,
To spare his Life?

(*To the King.*)

THEODORICK.

Ah! said'st thou not his Life?
Why will you drive me back upon my self,
To sink me in a Whirlpool of Despair?
Each Word you speak, alarms a Thought against him,

D

And

And raises every Sense to give me Pain.
 But know, I never rashly can destroy
 The Man I once so lov'd, or shed his Blood,
 So nearly join'd to that, whose purple Stream
 Flows thro' the Veins of *Ildergerte* our Queen.

ILDERGERTE.

Then am I satisfy'd he's safe.

(*Going.*)

THEODORICK.

Heli, attend the Queen.

Let *Decius* take the Field instead of *Osmín*.

(*Exeunt Queen, Beliza, and Heli.*)

HAROLD.

It grieves me, Sir, to see your gen'rous Heart
 A Prey to black Despair : You should rejoice
 To think upon the Danger you've escaped.
 I wou'd to Heav'n you were not thus allied.

THEODORICK.

What mean you by these Words?

HAROLD.

You are his Friend.

THEODORICK.

I was, 'tis true, I was : My Heart he shar'd ;
 But sure he has robb'd me of that Part I lent him,
 And now it yearns for what he has ta'en away.

HAROLD.

Forgive my forward Zeal : Still must I wish
 Heav'n had been pleas'd to join you to another.

THEODORICK.

Explain your dark ambiguous Phrase.

HAROLD.

Needs it explaining much : Have not your Allies
 All forsaken you, in your Emergency ?
 Our frontier Towns now own the *Swedish* Pow'r,
 And *Copenhagen* lies expos'd to th'Invader.

THEODORICK.

I thank thee for this kind Rebuke : Thou hast
 Awak'd me from my Lethargy : I came
 To seek what Measures shou'd be taken.
 But this late Treachery quite drove it from
 My Thoughts. You say we are forsaken : True :

But

But yet we've conquer'd now without their Aid,
(Sure *Osmin* was a Gen'ral to be prized)
And laid some thousand *Swedish* Soldiers cold
And breathless on the bloody Field of Battle.

HAROLD.

Grant this: His Letter urg'd some weighty
Reasons.

Consider yet, the Chance of War is doubtful,
And Fortune wavers with Inconstancy:
I think it prudent therefore, laying hold
Of our late Victory, to come to Terms.

THEODORICK.

Oh no: this *Swedish* King's the Glutton of Ambition,
Who means to Prey, and feast himself with Kingdoms,
Perversely obstinate he still insists,
That we with *Rosalinda* shall espouse;
Nor will on other Terms accept of Peace.

HAROLD.

Equivocating Prince! (he knows you're marry'd)
His chief Design is to amuse, thinking
You'll not accept; and means to ravage all
Our fruitful Borders, to enrich his Country
With his ill-gotten Plunder.

THEODORICK.

What must we be doing?
Think you, I mean our Troops should rust at Home,
For the Disease of Sloth to eat them up,
And be ignobly fear'd by blust'ring *Swedes*.
That Thought has fir'd each Part about me. Now
Cou'd I dauntless rush thro' all their thickest Force.

HAROLD.

Be peaceful rather: Policy forbids
To hazard such a Kingdom, on the Issue
Of a rude Skirmish, and uncertain Fight.

THEODORICK.

O *Harold*, think not of it: My Impatience

Out-runs the sleeping dilatory Congress :
The Sword shall end our Quarrel, not the Parchment.

HAROLD.

Oh, think again : For on this Battle hangs
The Crisis of our Fate.

THEODORICK.

Doubt you my Valour ?

HAROLD.

I cannot doubt what has so well been try'd.

THEODORICK.

I think you cannot doubt it, when you know
What deathless Honour crown'd my rising Fame
In *Dantzick's* Plain ; where I exulting led
Th' impatient Legions forth to certain Triumph.
Think you that Fortune only did attend
My Sword, in my late sov'reign Father's Reign.

HAROLD.

Who can forget that glorious Hour, which saw
Your matchless arm deal Ruin on our Foes !

THEODORICK.

What now should hinder this important Action ?

HAROLD.

Alas, too much, our sickly Constitution,
Worn out, and weaken'd with intestine Jars,
Hath need of all her Strength, to bear her up
Beneath the heavy Burthen.

THEODORICK.

Is not now
Rebellion quench'd, and *Osmia* too secured ?

HAROLD.

Not whilst he lives.

THEODORICK.

Name not his Life. I say
He is secure within our Castle Walls.

HAROLD.

A Garrison, which you must drain t'augment
Your Troops abroad, leave it defenceless for
His Faction, which, in your Absence, soon
May rise and free him thence.

THEODORICK.

THEODORICK.

Perhaps they are
Not numerous : *Heli* will discover that.

HAROLD.

He knows not half. What think you *Osmín* meant,
To grant those Favours to the Prisoners ?
Doth not that plain declare his Treachery,
And shew the *Swedes* are deeply in his Interest ?
The Victory too, that they let us obtain
In the late Skirmish, was but to amuse us,
'Till *Osmín's* Plot was ripe for Birth : then he wisely
May accept the Terms.

THEODORICK.

Wisely ! He accept ?

HAROLD.

Pardon me. I forgot she once was your's.

THEODORICK.

Because from me (when at our Court a Prisoner)
She met with generous Treatment, you will
Construe it Love.

HAROLD.

When you gave your Picture,
(Which she so kind received) you own'd to me
Your Love, and said——

THEODORICK.

No more : I cannot say
What in my idle Hours might pass, for then
I had not seen my *Ildergerte* :——But thought
In all that Time she might have quite forgot me.

HAROLD.

Never think it. What Woman e'er cou'd bear
An Injury of slighted Love ? The gay
Fantastick Sex, whose only Virtue is
In Pride, and that the chieftest Guard of all
Their Honour, glories in obsequious Crowds
Of Fools, that thronging press to catch a Smile :
'Tis with Regret they lose the least, that e'er
Did help to swell out their Retinue : But if one
Distinguish'd from the rest elope, no Arts
Will then secure him from her dear Revenge.

And

And now believe, that *Rosalinda* mov'd
 Her Brother to resent this gross Affront :
 And think that his Ambition will not let him
 Lay down his Arms on other Terms than first
 propos'd.

THEODORICK.

I'll not accept : This Arm shall first
 Decide it in the Field : I've still in Pay,
 Some thousand hardy Souls, that well can bear
 The Toil of Winter Camp, nor fear their freezing
 Blood ;

These will I head, nor leave them till he say,
Theod'rick now may make his own Conditions.

HAROLD.

Alas ! wou'd you but think it is impossible !
 I say it must not be.

THEODORICK.

How ! must not be !
 What Insolence e'er gave thy Tongue that Licence ?

HAROLD.

My Zeal for you, which burns so fierce, I see
 Will soon destroy me : But let it be so.
 Behold, tis you have caus'd this briny Dew,
 In vain it falls to quench my ardent Love ;
 For while I live, I cannot see you ruin'd.

THEODORICK.

By Heav'ns he weeps : Stop, stop thy Tears, my
 good
 Old Friend, or I shall catch thy Softness : ——
 Nay, now they flow——I cannot see you thus.

HAROLD.

I mean you well : For in your Hands I'd place
 My Life, in Pledge of my Sincerity.

THEODORICK.

Go on then : You now may trust my Temper,
 For I wou'd hear what more you can object.

HAROLD.

Then think, to raise the Troops you mention,
 How much your Forts you rob, leave them expos'd
 To

To the Foe : Think how weak at Home, when thus
You've drain'd your Capital, and those Supplies
How little to be trusted ; how soon may they
Revolt : For much I fear that more than half
Are ripe for Mutiny, the People's Patience
Worn out, worn out with lingering Wars.
To be secure, you must cut off their Leader,
And accept the Terms.

THEODORICK.

Forbear, or I shall kindle up
Anew : In vain I'm on my Guard, for you still are
Th'avenging Fiend that follows me behind,
And stings me into Madness.—Perish all !
Perish !—Leave my *Ildergerte* !—No :—Na-
ture's
Axle first shall break, this Orb fall down,
And crush it like it's former Chaos.

HAROLD.

Those Looks so stern, declare you think me false.
Then oh ! destroy me here, the Work will soon be
done,
For thy Unkindness has already reach'd my Heart.

Enter MESSENGER.

MESSENGER.

A Herald desires Admittance.

THEODORICK.

Let him enter.

Enter HERALD.

HERALD.

The Enemy, by Surprise, has rush'd from out
The Wood, and cut off more than Half our Army,
Before it reach'd the Plain : Now they pursue
Our flying Troops, while yet a Corps remains
To fall upon our Rear, and we expect
Ere now they're all demolish'd.

THEODORICK.

Depart.

(Exit Herald.)

Oh *Harold*! this confirms all thou hast said.
Excuse me; I have been too passionate:
But could you see what wild Disorder reigns
Within, you'd pity me.

HAROLD.

You do not yet forgive:
Then take thy Sword, and stab me now: I wou'd
Not live to see you led in captive Bonds,
To grace the Train of one that has betray'd you.

THEODORICK.

Ah! that Thought now shakes me to the Bottom:
What, be the Sport of Slaves! Avert it Heav'n.
Harold you've vanquish'd now, I'm wholly your's:
O lead me where you will, too long I've err'd,
And nurs'd this pois'nous Serpent in my Bosom,
'Till I have hatch'd my Ruin.

HAROLD.

There's one Way left
Still to prevent it.

THEODORICK.

Believe me, *Osmin* dies.

HAROLD.

But what Answer to the *Swedish* Princess?

THEODORICK.

There, there I'm lost!—Oh, my *Ildergorte*!

HAROLD.

Were she of royal Blood, thy Choice could not be
blam'd.

THEODORICK.

No: rather wish (if thou would'st have me happy)
She were a rural Nymph, and I her Swain:
Then we need not part. But Curses wait on
Human Greatness, that dooms us to be wretched.

HAROLD.

Had she ne'er been your's, she might have still been
happy
In her proper Sphere: Wedded to some worthy Lord.

THEODORICK.

THEODORICK.

But now her dazzling Virtues blaze around,
And I have rais'd her high, to be
The Envy of the wishing World.——

HAROLD.

Indeed she merits Praise; but *Rosalinda* too
Is fair.

THEODORICK.

Oh, name her not with *Ildergerte*!
She is divinely bright! More fair than all
Th' op'ning Blossoms of the Field, or fragrant
Flowers, that lavish Nature paints, with all
The Beauties that adorn the World's First-Spring:
But oh, to wear her in my Heart, is greater
Treasure far, than all the World can give:
For sure, such Purity and Truth, is no where
But in *Ildergerte*: All my Hours she gilds with Peace;
And in her Arms are flowing Joys, eternal
Sweets, and everlasting Love.——
How can I then forsake this Excellence?

HAROLD.

Oh, were she not the Bar to all our Peace,
I cou'd with Joy behold her in your Arms:
But Kings, who are the Fathers of their People,
Shou'd ease their Burdens, and relieve their Cares:
Not hazard their whole Kingdom for a Joy,
When ev'ry Nation can produce a Beauty.

THEODORICK.

Oh, *Harold*! Hast thou Sense, and yet mak'st light
of her:

Is not there Nature finish'd: Were she like
Other Beauties that would tarnish with the Sun,
And all her Charms become a Prey to Time,
Then, perhaps, I might change, and be as happy
In another Fair: But her transcendent
Virtue lights a nobler Flame, that's mix'd with
Love so pure, as might be paid to Heav'n.
Ye Powers, why were thus your choicest Gifts
Bestow'd on me to squander; will ye not
Account for this excessive waste of Goodness,

E

And

And endless Sums of Joy neglected?

HAROLD.

No; they'll record thy Constancy, and Faith,
That thus cou'd yield the Idol of thy Soul,
To appease the gath'ring Storm, that thy dear Country
Might 'scape the Cloud which hover'd o'er its Head.

THEODORICK.

Alas, my People!

HAROLD.

Oh, think what Miseries impending threaten us,
When we're besieged by a cruel Foe.
What Bloodshed, Rapine, Desolation,
Destroy the People, lay thy Country waste.
What Cries, by barbarous Murthers, will assault
Thy wounded Ears, from ev'ry Age and Sex;
That cry in vain to those, that know no Mercy.

THEODORICK.

Oh!

HAROLD.

Imagine then the Horrors of that Day;
When mourning Matrons weep their Husbands lost,
And tender Mothers grieve for Children slain;
With torn dishevel'd Hair, and streaming Eyes,
They beat their Breasts, imploring of thy Aid:
But then thy Pity comes too late, to save
Thy ruin'd Country from such dismal Plagues.

THEODORICK.

Oh, my Country! Oh, my *Ildergerte*!

HAROLD.

I see, she is the Price at which we must be sold,
Poor worthless Slaves, below a Monarch's Thought.

THEODORICK.

Not think of ye?—Oh, my People!—Alas!
They do but sit too near: Their Interest now
Strikes hard, and almost deads my working Brain.

HAROLD.

It seems I am mistaken then: Indeed,
There was a Time, a Time, if I had heard
A Whisper of Oppression, or of Wrong,

I should

I should have said, let but your Sov'reign know
The Cause, and Justice will exalt her Scale,
And all your Grievances shall find redress:
For *Theodorick* ever lov'd his People.

THEODORICK.

Heav'n witness; if that Love be yet abated.
No Martyr's Zeal was ever warmer, for
Now, I could die to save them.

HAROLD.

I always thought
That thy great Soul was constant; and now find
You did retire a while, to arm your self,
For more than Heaven requires.

THEODORICK.

Oh! Mine's a sharp,
And fiery Trial: It is more than Death
To lose my *Ildergerte*. What have I done,
Ye cruel Powers, to rack me with these Torments,
Or make me Author of my Country's Woe.

HAROLD.

In vain we call the Ways of Heav'n in question;
For Man that's blinded by his wilful Passions,
Cannot behold the Cause, nor trace the Secret
Springs of Justice; tho' he, perhaps the chief
Spring that may move them: And now believe
Heav'n has design'd thee our Deliverer,
To make a Trial of thy Virtue, prove
(What has so long been thought) that thy brave Soul's
Greater than e'er before was given to Mortal.

THEODORICK.

I am, I am a Man, and thou hast seen
My Weakness: There's no such Thing as Constancy
In Nature, and they that boast it, never
Have been try'd. Once I should have said, Let
Fortune empty all her Quivers on me,
I shall receive them with a Soul unshaken.
But now——

HAROLD.

And yet thou art not lost:
Thou, like the golden Ore, dissolv'd in the

Annealing Fire, which when brought forth, doth shine
 With greater Splendor, and gazing, we admire
 Its Brightness. Thus, all Eyes are fix'd on you :
 Thou art our ruling Star, whose Influence
 Has Power to doom our Bliss or Ruin.
 Thy Goodness now, would be the Tale of After
 Ages, and future Bards rehearse thy Glory,
 And tell thy wond'rous Deeds ; and when they'd draw
 A finish'd Hero, compare him with *Theodorick*.

THEODORICK.

Harold, thy Friendship makes thee Partial :
 I ill deserve these Praises.
 But for thee, and for my bleeding Country's
 Sake, I will do more to merit them.—Yes,
 I will resign this Darling of my Life.
 Witness ye Powers, with what an aching Heart,
 I here give up my *Ildergerte*. Sure 'tis
 Your Will, that with resistless Force rules all within :
 Your Destiny alone could make me break
 Thro' all the sacred Pledges of my Love.
 Whate'er I suffer, shield her Innocence,
 Arm her with more than mortal Patience,
 To guard against the threat'ning Storm.

HAROLD.

What Dangers can invade her ; is she not safe
 Within your Kingdom here ? To be provided
 With a befitting Dow'r for one that was your Queen.
 Ah ! that was. There, there thou hast struck a Key,
 Whose Notes so harsh, have jarr'd my very Soul.
 Now all my Fears beat thick upon me ; now I hear
 my *Ildergerte*

Most movingly bemoan her widow'd State,
 And in the Anguish of her tortur'd Soul,
 Cry, cruel, faithless *Theodorick*.

HAROLD.

I never cou'd have thought, I should have seen,
 My Royal Master's Reason thus destroy'd,
 Thus scatter'd in the Whirlwind of his Passions.

Were

Were it now told, it wou'd not be believ'd.

THEODORICK.

Now thou hast seen too much, therefore go, leave
me,

Thou most inhuman Torturer. For thou wouldst
Divorce me from my All, my Life, my Soul,
My *Ildergerte*.

HAROLD.

Heaven now heal the Terrors
Of thy Soul, and guard thee from Relapse, for
It has heard thy pious Promise, to preserve
So many Thousands from the Sword and Ruin.

THEODORICK.

Wou'd it were sheathed here to end these Miseries.
(*Striking his Breast.*)

HAROLD.

How thou art alter'd! Is this our King that ——

THEODORICK.

What do'st thou here? Did I not bid thee go?

HAROLD.

I cannot leave you thus.

THEODORICK.

You shall not stay to pry
On my disorder'd Soul. Leave me, I say I will be
left. (*Exit Harold.*)

So——now I am alone, I will collect
My self, and try once more to be a Man.
A King! What's that? an empty Name, and ill
Secures our Weakness: What is Majesty?
Whose tinsel Greatness charms the Crowd, a Crown
At best is but a gilded Care: Cou'd they,
Like me, but know it's Weight, tho' laid beneath
Their Feet, not one wou'd stoop to take it up,
Or place it on his Brow; which then wou'd soon
Be furrow'd with the Burden of it's Cares.
How wretched is regal Greatness, all our Paths
Are strew'd with Thorns, which tho' they pierce, yet
must

By

By us be trodden down, before they wound the Publick.

Monarchs are only Nature's Ministers, the second
Cause ordain'd to do the Work, and prop
A sinking State. But sure, if well we bear the Office,
We must be over-paid, for all the Troubles
An earthly Diadem can give : Else
These glittering Baubles do but vainly cheat,
And make us still more wretched, as we're great.
More solid Joy delights the humble Swain,
But Heav'n is just, and Man must not complain,
But act the allotted Part, tho' sure to give him }
Pain.

The End of the Second Act.

ACT

A C T III.

S C E N E I.

THEODORICK *alone, in a Night-Dress, as just out of Bed; walks with a disturbed Motion before he speaks.*

THEODORICK.

SURELY, I wander now amidst Enchantment,
That's charm'd my active Spirits into Ice :
Cold, trembling and cold, as tho' the Hand of
Death were on me !——Does *Ildergerte* now
Call ? No :——Dark gloomy Thoughts o'er shade
my Soul,

And mock me with imagin'd Sounds.——In vain
I leave my Bed, and range from Room to Room ;
No Place affords me rest. Hark !——Methought I
heard

The Clash of Swords.——Let them enter : They will
Not take *Theodorick*. (who now is scarce
The Shade of him) my *Ildergerte* has chas'd
Away my better Part, and Love has now
Usurp'd the vacant Throne of Honour.

But oh ! my People still lies heavy at my Heart.——
Wou'd I had never seen fair *Rosalinda* !

Then these raging Conflicts ne'er had torn me,
I never should have hazarded my Crown.——If lost ?
My own dear Country'll scarce afford a Grave.——
Here let me press the Earth, while yet 'tis mine,

(Throws himself down.

Here let forgetful Dullness seize my Sense,

Lethargick

Lethargick Slumbers heal my Cares for ever.

(Raisés himself.

Nothing but Death can still my working Brain.

Enter ILDERGERTE.

What heavenly Form that shines like opening Day
From out the East! — is come to visit
This dark Abode! 'Tis *Ildergerte*!
Why would you cross the Palace-Yard, to catch
The Dampness of the Air, ere *Phæbus*' Beams have
 blest it,
Oh, tell me why! what wou'd my *Ildergerte*?

ILDERGERTE.

Impatient, I am come to seek my Soul's
Best Treasure: Trust me, I could almost chide;
To fly me thus, and make my Bed a Desert;
For there, forlorn, alone, I cou'd not rest:
How could you loiter here, when my expecting Eyes
Have look'd, and watch'd, 'till they did fail with
 gazing.

When you departed, I to the Window flew,
And as I sat, each hovering Shade the Moon
Had form'd, I vainly thought was you.
Then eager to the Door I ran, to meet
The Lord of all my Wishes; soon I found
My aching Sight deceiv'd, and dash'd my Joy.

THEODORICK.

To Bed, my Love: Nor break thy Rest for one,
That ill deserves thy Care.

ILDERGERTE.

Cruel to bid me go:
I have no Peace without thee; when thou'rt absent,
My wand'ring Thoughts still roam, like some be-
 nighted
Traveller in Desert wide, that seeks in vain
For Safety, or Repose; your Presence then
Can only heal my Cares, and crown my Rest.

THEODORICK.

THEODORICK.

Why all this mighty Stock of Tenderness
Bestow'd on me, on me, that has so wrong'd you?

ILDERGERTE.

What means my Lord?—'Tis only you cou'd
cause it;

You're the Sov'reign of my Bliss, and Centre
Of all my Joys: Then talk no more of Wrongs;
(For *Osmin*, as I think, is innocent)
Tho' much I know you grieve your injur'd Friend,
Who may not yet be lost: He has a Soul
That can be mov'd, and I will use the utmost
Means to win him back.

THEODORICK.

Oh the false Traitor!
Why would you 'wake me to the Torment I
Found so difficult to quiet.

ILDERGERTE.

Still misterious!
I judg'd, my Lord, you'd found him innocent.

THEODORICK.

No: he is false and faithless, all the World
'Is so: even I, your own *Theodorick* is false.

ILDERGERTE.

Wound not my Peace with such a Thought, I can't
Believe it: when you're not true, then shall I think
That Angels are not just.

THEODORICK.

Surely thou art one:
Thou art all Truth, all Constancy, and Love,
And yet thou do'st deceive.

ILDERGERTE.

Oh Heavens! I deceive thee!

THEODORICK.

Yes; thou do'st deceive; I took thee for a Woman,
But thou art more than Mortal: For nothing
On this Earth, besides thy self, is constant.

ILDERGERTE.

Indeed, my Lord, you're much disorder'd: I shou'd
Greatly grieve, but that I know the Cause; and hope

F

It

It soon will end. Believe me, I can't think
That *Osmín's* guilty; therefore, I once more
Must move his Suit, and plead you'll grant his Par-
don.

THEODORICK.

I charge thee, as thou lovest me, speak not of him;
My Word is past, and he shall surely die.

ILDERGERTE.

Since you will have it so, I must obey;
But you'll excuse these Tears——

THEODORICK.

Forgive me; I did not mean thus to provoke them,
'Tis the first Time, you ever felt my Harshness:
Now my unbridled Passions bear no Rule
Upon my Words, at Random they fly off,
Like Sparks of sharpen'd Steel, against the whetting
Stone.

Now my Misfortunes pierce so deep, they wound
My very Soul. (Nay stop the Torrent of thy Tears)
You too add to my Afflictions.——
Oh! where shall I find Rest?

ILDERGERTE.

Are not these Arms still open to receive you?
There you securely may repose: Indeed,
My Lord, 'tis much unkind to think, because
You once did chide, that I wou'd now forsake you.
Then give your Sorrows vent, Oh! let me bear
A Part, I'll try most kindly to assuage them,
To heal thy wounded Heart, and pour the Balm of
Love,
Into thy Soul.

THEODORICK.

Oh, thou most kind Physician;
Whose Tenderness wou'd give Relief to any
Other Cause: in vain you now pretend to heal
My Malady, which, like a Wound that's stopt
By some unskillful Surgeon's Hand, wou'd soon
Break out, and shew it were not cur'd.
No Opiate strong enough to lull my Care,
Or calm the Pangs I feel.

ILDERGERTE.

Oh, tell me thy Distress, and pour forth all thy Soul :

Do not, do not deprive me of my Share,

THEODORICK.

Oh ! —— I cannot tell the Cause,

ILDERGERTE.

I know, you now imagine I'm unworthy :
But if there's yet remaining in your Breast,
One Spark of Love that is not quite extinguish'd,
I beg you would——

THEODORICK.

That I yet love you still,
May Heav'n bear Witness, tho' I want Words t'ex-
press

The wond'rous Stock : Indeed to you it may not
Look so clear, when thus disturb'd with Troubles ;
But like the lab'ring Ocean beats more strong,
When ruffled with the Storms. Then ask no more,
(If you'd keep Peace within) for my distracted
Senses are, alas ! too weak to bear it.

ILDERGERTE.

Heavens now compose him. (*Aside.*) You have,
my Lord,
Too long a Stranger been to Sleep, but would
You now return to Bed, that friendly Balm
Would ease your Cares : Then pray to Rest,
For Night's far spent, and Day will soon approach.

THEODORICK.

Oh, too soon, to light me to new Sorrows.

Enter HAROLD, unseen.

ILDERGERTE,

Into my Bosom pour thy Grievs, and I
Will sooth thee to thy Rest ; and while you slumber,
Will Heav'n invoke, to guard thee from all Dangers.

THEODORICK.

Still, still so kind ! Hear this, ye Powers, and
you'll applaud

Her Virtue : Then blame not me, if you
Have made the Charm too strong, to be withstood.

ILDERGERTE.

Let me conduct you hence ; I'll calm thy Sorrows
With gentle Songs of Love, 'till on my panting
Bosom you find Rest, there sigh thy troubled Soul to
Peace,

Grant me but this, I will no more complain,
But praise the Gods, that eas'd thee of thy Pain.

(*Exeunt.*)

HAROLD comes forward.

HAROLD.

Now all is lost ! and I have wash'd an Æthiop.
I cannot rest, and yet it is not Morn,
Love and Ambition have so fired my Blood.
Sure 'tis a Fever, or what else cou'd make
The Brain thus light, and chace soft Sleep away,
With jealous Fears. I've done enough to make
A Coward bold, for were it known, 'twere certain
Death.

(*Osmin shall soon be quiet.*) I have found
The Clue, that leads me to my Wishes,
And will not here forsake it.

Enter HELI.

Heli, good Morrow :

I did not think to meet you here so soon,
A Bridegroom's Haste has made you out-strip *Phabus*.

HELI.

He now begins to dart a Ray thro' all
The Element, and paints the beauteous Sky,
With crimson Blushes like the Virgin Bride ;
Nor need we wait his Beams : Her Eyes can well
Supply his Light, that shines auspicious
On this happy Morn. *Beliza* sure
Has chid my Stay ; for I have learnt, that she's
Already gone to seek the Queen.

HAROLD.

HAROLD.

How! say you that she's gone to seek the Queen?
There may be more in this than we foresee.

HELI.

Were I to shew my Heart, I fear there is,
Which brought me here before th'appointed Hour.
But what new Scheme, my Lord, so soon unsealed
Your Eyes from Sleep; I judge no Woman claims
A Place in your retired Thoughts?

HAROLD.

Heli, thou art mistaken, Oh! I cou'd curse
The Tyrant Sex, (Man's adverse Fate) whose Eyes
Enslave, to sink us in Destruction.
Woman's the Quick-sand, swallows all our Hopes,
When just arrived to the Summit of our Wishes.

HELI.

What of *Beliza*?

HAROLD.

My Daughter!
Heli, you shall find she's in my Power.

HELI.

Thus early with the Queen, appears as if
She went to ask the Life of *Ofmin*.

HAROLD.

A Boon she'll not receive: Last Night, the King
Was wholly bent upon his Death.

HELI.

His Death!

Welcome Revenge: My Heart now bounds with Joy.
Let me thus clasp you to my Breast, to swage
It's sprightly Beatings, ere mine leap out, to meet
Thine in the Transport: I now foresee that
All's within our Compass, his Death's the Earnest
Of our future Wishes. But what produc'd
This mighty Change, to which the King appear'd
So much averse?

HAROLD.

A Friend: For would you do
A secret Injury, the securest Mask
Is that of Friendship: Then you need but draw

The

The Sword, they'll wound themselves. And now I
think

Here's a strong Proof, the King has giv'n Consent
To part with *Ildergerte*.

HELI.

How! after this,
Nothing will seem too strange: But let me know
How you perform'd this Miracle?

HAROLD.

The King
You know is valiant, warm and young;
Honest, sincere, and unsuspecting Men.
(Such Minds are oft' a Prey to Flattery's gilded Shew)
Time has not yet his easy Humour ruffled,
By Nature's second Sense; too-dear bought Experi-
ence,

And he's soon byass'd by a seeming Friend;
Indeed, to hide the Bait with more Success,
I've gilt it with a Name immortal: Let that live,
It cannot hinder my Reward, nor rob
Me of a Kingdom.

HELI.

Sure thou art Fate's Twin,
And with an equal Power, can cast the Lots
Which Kings are forc'd to draw.

HAROLD.

Wou'd I could confirm it.

HELI.

What prevents?

HAROLD.

Woman! the Bane of all our Arts, 'tis Woman!
And yet, by all the Gods! I am mad, 'till I
Possess that Woman.

HELI.

Where points your Meaning?

HAROLD.

The Queen.

HELI.

Nay, then all's lost!
And thou art lost as far as there's Perdition.

Cou'd

Cou'd I have thought that you had lov'd the Queen,
You never shou'd have fold me for a Smile.

HAROLD.

By Heav'ns, she never yet smil'd on me :
But with majestic Awe, forbid the least
Attack, I e'er had form'd to try her Virtue.
Think'st thou, that I wou'd be a Slave to Beauty,
To cringe, and fawn, and be cast off at Pleasure :
A Woman's Slave ! No ; I am still the Statesman,
And will make Love keep time with Interest.

HELI.

You now talk Reason, if I dare believe :
But, why before, were I not trusted with
Your Passion ?

HAROLD.

Behold her Charms ! then think if I'd not Cause
To fear a Rival, 'till I found your Breast
Was Adamant, and blunted all the Show'r of Darts,
That matchless Beauty sends.

HELI.

Name it not ; I hate her.

HAROLD.

Her Pow'r you do.
Depriv'd of that, she's harmless as the Sex.

HELI.

You have confes'd, she'd broke thro' all our Measures,
And still she reigns the Mistress of your Soul.

HAROLD.

That she's not touch'd, still I am Monarch there,
And if we conquer, she's then but the Slave
That waits my Pleasure.

HELI.

Conquer ! I now despair of that ;
And all our Schemes are ruin'd by this Woman !
Did you not say she'd baffl'd all your Arts ?

HAROLD.

Imaginary Evils that my Fears
Had made : Because I left the King in haste,
And judg'd ere this she'd cool'd his Temper,
And form'd him to her Wishes. Still, I think,

Our

Our Plot can't fail——last Night I made a use
Of his Authority (e'en from a Word
The King had drop'd in haste) and with all Secrecy,
Dispatched to the *Swedish* Camp full Pow'rs,
A Treaty to conclude.——And thus, I think,
The State of our Affairs must press him to
Accept of the Divorce. The Queen for her
Revenge is certain Ours.

HELI.

Ruin her with
Her own Weapons: So far Things are prosp'rous;
But should be finish'd ere the Princess can
Arrive, lest she should lend the King her Aid.

HAROLD.

I fear her not; but rather think she'd Glory
In his Fall. Love once scorn'd, soon turns Rebel,
And wou'd destroy the Idol it once worshipp'd.
But to remove all Doubt, it shall be ended,
Ere she can reach our Coast. How stands
Our little Army? say, is it well-affected?

HELI.

Call it not little: Now 'tis much increas'd.
I've caught each straggling Fool that cou'd be brib'd
With Hopes of better Government, or Promotion;
And all are ready to fight, or march on Notice.

HAROLD.

Heli, thou art my self, and shall be equal paid;
For no Reward's too great for this thy Care.

HELI.

And yet, my Lord, I wrong you to neglect
Your fairest Gift. I should ere this have waited on
Beliza.

HAROLD.

The Fault is mine; that Charge belongs to me;
But I'll no longer now delay your Bliss.

HELI.

Then will I haste to seek the lovely Fair. (*Going*.
But see, she comes, and with her comes the Queen.

HAROLD.

The Queen I judge is going to the Temple:
'Twere

It were not prudent she shou'd see you here :
Go you prepare the Priest, *Beliza* soon
Shall crown your Wishes, and requite your Love.

(Exit Heli.

I wou'd observe them.

(Withdraws.

Enter QUEEN, and BELIZA.

BELIZA.

Then must my *Osmin* die? Oh, piercing Thought!
Has the relentless Monarch lost all Sense
Of Mercy? Is he deaf to all our Prayers?

ILDERGERTE.

Indeed he is not what he was; the kind,
The merciful, the gentle *Theodorick*.
Last Night I wou'd have strove, by tender Sighs,
And soft persuasive Language to appease
His Ire, and melt him to Compassion.
But he, with fatal Aspect, sternly frown'd;
Then with fierce Words he chid my eager Prayers,
And charg'd me, as I did his Love respect,
Never to mention faithless *Osmin* more.

BELIZA.

Oh Horror! Horror! then his Death's decreed!
Oh! I cou'd rend the Earth with bitter Wailings!
For Oh! my cursed Error wrought his Ruin.

ILDERGERTE.

Thy Tears, *Beliza*, shew an honest Sorrow,
But you too much indulge th' excessive Passion
Of your Grief: No more be conscious, your
Mistake's the Occasion of his Death; for
There have been Schemes more deeply laid than we
Can fathom. Afflictions croud so fast
I cannot weep, or else with you I'd drop
A friendly Tear: Much I fear that Treachery's
Reach'd the King. Last Night some solemn Sorrow
Shook his Soul, that was too great for Vent.
I oft implor'd he'd let me know the Cause;
He often strove to tell, but Sighs rush'd in so thick,
They strain'd his Heart, and quite deny'd him Ut-
terance.

G

BELIZA.

BELIZA.

Sure some malignant Planet reigns,
That scatters discord o're the Earth,
To visit us with new Calamities.

ILDERGERTE.

And with oppressive Weight they fall on me,
To wound me thus in my *Theodorick*.
Tho' much you seem to blame the King, I know
You'd pity his Distress, cou'd you but see
His agonizing Grief, (for sure 'tis great)
Last Night, (that tedious Night) in broken Slumbers,
As mimic Fancy vex'd his Brain with Horrors.
He, sometimes raving, would cry out, the Blood
Of *Osmin's* pure, see how bright it flows, there shall
No more be spilt -- Anon, with wild Extravagance,
He'd eager grasp my Arm, and cry, they shall
Not tear you hence. Then soon he'd start upright,
And say, the Gods must be appeas'd, they will
Have Justice. In vain, I strove to 'swage his Pain,
Or ease his Grief, ere half the Night was wasted,
He vanish'd from the Bed, and left me there
To sigh alone. There long I could not rest,
But to the Window flew, and sat forlorn,
Where I the ling'ring Moments number'd,
By the slow Progress of the glimm'ring Moon.

BELIZA.

Indeed I greatly pity your Distress,
But I cou'd number Woe with Woe, until
The Tale wou'd have no End. For cou'd you think,
My Father does this Day——

HAROLD, comes forward.

Pardon, fair Queen,
This bold Intrusion, that I interrupt
Your Conversation thus. But, as I pass'd,
I thought I heard *Beliza's* Voice complain;
And sure 'tis so: Why else those Tears, what idle Tale
Have you disclos'd, that may disturb the Queen,
Or give Offence?

ILDERGERTE.

My Lord, my Griefs have caus'd

Those

Those Tears to flow. But I have such a Mass
Of Sorrows, Time I fear will ne'er exhaust them :
Will you, my gentle Lord, grant one Request ?

HAROLD.

There's no Request I can deny the Queen :
Did you command my Life, beneath your Feet
I here would lay it down, and gaze away
My Soul on those bright Eyes

ILDERGERTE.

Talk not of me,
But think upon the Anguish of the King:
I know your Friendship's great, go seek him then,
And you with well-tun'd Eloquence may heal
His tortur'd Soul, and cure it of Despair.

HAROLD.

What say you, Madam, is the King disorder'd ?

ILDERGERTE.

In great Uneasiness he fled from me,
And to the cloister'd Solitude repair'd :
Where, as I fear, that Canker-worm Despair
Preys on his Mind, and poisons all his Hopes.

HAROLD.

I go, with Comfort to assuage his Grief,
And pour the healing Balm in his Soul.

ILDERGERTE.

Oh, no——You must not yet : He has commanded,
That none approach on Pain of his Displeasure.

HAROLD.

What can this mean ?

ILDERGERTE.

My Lord, I cannot tell ;
But dread th' Event. Here will I offer up
My due Orisons with an humble Heart,
That the just Pow'rs would shed their Influence on him ;
Then will I go prepare him to receive you.
See him I will, tho' Life shou'd pay the forfeit.
My Lord, I will expect you. (Exit.

HAROLD.

Madam, I'll attend.
Now, by my Life, it is too much to bear,

To see you thus profane your Bridal-Day
 With Tears; those Eyes declare you've spent the Night
 In Weeping, 'till each Sense you've drown'd in Sor-
 row,
 And banish'd Duty from your Heart.

BELIZA.

My Lord, you now too rashly do accuse me;
 For I, next Heaven, my Father do adore:
 And you I love with all the Tenderness,
 That an indulgent Daughter can, who ne'er
 Before did disobey.

HAROLD.

No more: Do'st thou boast in that?
 But now if you don't instantly comply,
 To give your Hand to *Heli*, I'll drive you out
 An Exile hence, to graze in Fortune's Field,
 Or wander thro' the World a Beggar.

BELIZA.

My Father, I most gladly wou'd submit,
 But I already have dispos'd my Heart,
 Without that Gift, the sacred Rites of Marriage
 Are all prophan'd; polluted with unhallow'd
 Fire. But I'll endeavour ne'er to think
 Of *Osmin*, if you'll command me not to wed
 With *Heli*.

HAROLD.

Thou now dost well, to think no more of him:
 For he ere long shall be no more; with this
 Signet, the King gave me the free Disposal
 Of his Life: And I go now to execute
 The Sentence. While *Osmin* lives there is no
 Hopes of thee, for he's the Spring of all
 Thy Disobedience.

BELIZA.

What means my Father!
 That fatal Rage thus lightens in your Eyes
 With Flashes fierce, presaging of my Ruin.

HAROLD.

Not thine, but his; for he now falls the Sacrifice
 Of my Displeasure.

BELIZA.

No, rather let thy Vengeance

Fall

Fall on *Beliza*; I only have offended,
But save his Life, for he is innocent.

HAROLD.

He dies, unless you now consent.

BELIZA.

Oh, cruel Thought! Must he then die for me?

HAROLD.

I see you trifle, I've no Time to waste. (*Going.*)

BELIZA.

Then drag me too?—Yet stay——Oh hear me?
hear me?

Did you but know what Agony I feel,
Hard as thou art, you'd give your Hand to raise
Your only Child, thus weeping at your Feet,
Imploring of the Life of him, whose Death
Must sink me to Despair, and quite distract
My Brain. Oh! then you need not turn me out forlorn.
Where'er I dwell, Misery will keep her awful Court;
And all her dreadful Furies will attend me.

HAROLD.

Hold up, my Heart, for now thou must not melt.
(*Aside.*)

Seek not to move me with thy soft Complainings,
Whose Disobedience hath untied the Knot of my Affection.

BELIZA.

Then let me with him die; for there 'tis rest:
But here 'tis Rage!--'Tis Madness!--'Tis Distraction!

HAROLD.

No, you're dispos'd of; he must die alone.

BELIZA.

Oh, save him!--save him!-- (*Raving, catches hold of*
He cannot, shall not, must not die for me. [*him.*])

HAROLD.

He now shall live, if you'll consent to *Heli*.

BELIZA.

If I must be the Victim, drag me forth,
To Death, or Marriage, 'tis an equal Portion.

The End of the Third Act.

A C T IV.

S C E N E I.

SCENE opens, and discovers a Temple ; soft Music ;
 THEODORICK in a pensive Posture, with a Dagger
 in his Hand, rises and comes forward,

THEODORICK.

'TIS vain. —
 Give o'er those magic Sounds, whose boasted
 Charms
 Can sooth e'en savage Breasts — perhaps a-while
 They may enervate Reason ; blunt the Edge
 Of sharp Reflection ; steal us from our selves,
 And lull the Soul with such bewitching Softness,
 That dozing, we at length forget its Cares.
 But then, when dire Afflictions, sharp as mine,
 Have ta'en deep root within in the Heart, in vain
 The skilful Artist sweeps the trembling Strings,
 In Melody divine — No Music then
 Can sooth its Anguish, charm it into Peace.
 The Grave, the only Refuge of the Wretched,
 Must give me ease — This Instrument of Death
 Will do't — But then Eternity, that hangs
 Upon the Point of it — Eternity —
 Ay! there's the Pause. — Without that awful Thought
 E'en Cowards dare to die. — Who wou'd not rather,
 When Life grows irksome, boldly cast it from him,
 Than toil and sweat under the grievous Burden?
 But then to do that Violence to our selves,

Which,

Which, when we do to others, self-convicted,
And conscious of the Wrong, th' affrighted Soul,
Starts back with Horror, and disowns the Deed.
It must not be. — I'll arm myself with Reason,
And combat with the Evil. — He alone
Can greatly conquer, who subdues himself.
Now I am calm again. — Oh gracious Heaven,
How weak, alas! is Man, with all his Knowledge.
Were not his Nature sullied and debased
With headstrong Passions, that most noble Creature
Wou'd bear too near a Semblance of his Maker.

Enter ILDERGERTE.

Ah! *Ildergerte!* that lovely, wretched fair one:
Nay, now I fear my firm Resolves are shaken.
Madam, why came you here, to seek a Wretch,
That fain wou'd hide him from the World and you?

ILDERGERTE.

Think you, that I can see you languish thus,
And not partake your Grief? — But why, my Lord,
Did you now start, as if you'd met your Bane?
Oh, tell me why, wherein have I offended?
Let me but know the Reason, that I may
No longer groan beneath your fierce Disdain?

THEODORICK.

When I disdain thee, may all Joys fly from me:
May Furies haunt me with the foulest Horrors,
And sting my Heart with sharper Pangs than now.
Oh, *Ildergerte!* how fleeting are our Joys!
You were the Fountain of my Bliss, which flow'd
With such Profuseness, that I seem'd to taste
Th' immortal Joys of Heaven! The Fates themselves
With envious Eyes beheld my Bliss, and now
They would deprive me of this fair Possession.

ILDERGERTE.

Oh! do not rack me with these Doubts; but tell me
Whence flows your piercing Grief: If I'm the Cause,
Here point your Steel: Behold I bare my Breast.

THEODORICK.

THEODORICK.

Ah! thy Fondness pierces deeper than the Dagger:
 Oh! cruel, racking Torment, that I now
 Must be compell'd to turn my Eyes away
 From thee, thou dearest Darling of my Ruin.

ILDERGERTE.

Am I? am I thy Ruin? then kill me here!
 Let me not live one Moment longer.
 Oh! give me now that friendly Steel, within
 My Breast I'll plunge it deep, lest thou
 With trembling Hand shouldst err, and miss the fatal
 Wound.

THEODORICK.

Wou'dst thou, that I destroy thee with this Dagger,
 And sink my Soul with such a Weight of Sin,
 As would eternally destroy my Peace.
 Believe me, we've no Bus'ness with this Weapon,
(Throws away the Dagger.)
 Death is deny'd to us. Tho' I with Joy
 Could now lay down this heavy Load of Life,
 For I'm the most forlorn of human Race.
 Oh! *Ildergerte!* what do I bear for thee?

ILDERGERTE.

Oh Heav'ns! for me!—then am I curs'd, indeed,
 If I'm the Cause of all thy Misery!
 And doubly curs'd, not knowing of Relief.
 Since you refuse to ease your troubled Breast,
 I'll steal away, in Secret yield my Life,
 And end your Woe.

THEODORICK.

Oh! couldst thou leave me then?

ILDERGERTE.

Witness ye Powers, the Horror of that Thought!
 Tho' there's no Torture I think hard, that could
 Recover your late Peace of Mind——What can
 I suffer more than knowing thou art wretched:
 I cannot live, and see thee thus become
 A Prey to Anguish, and incessant Grief.

THEODORICK.

By all the mutual Agonies we feel,
 By thy dear Self, the greatest Oath that I

Can

Can swear, your Death wou'd make me yet more
wretched :

Plunge me into the deepest Gulf of Misery.
Thou art my All of Bliss ! Soul of my Soul,
The dearest Treasure of my Heart.
Oh ! let me grasp thee ever in my Arms :
Here hold thee ever : To be thus embraced,
To be thus circled, is too much of Joy
For Man to bear. I grow a God, and now
All Sense of Care's dissolv'd in the vast Tide
Of Extacy and Bliss : Let Nations sink,
And mighty Empires be o'erwhelm'd in Ruin,]
It never shall divide us, we will rest
In the cold Bosom of the Earth together.

ILDERGERTE.

What means my Lord, to start and tremble thus,
As if thy Words contain'd some dire Import ?

THEODORICK.

Oh ! I am all Confusion, Anarchy within :
I am too weak to bear this mighty Conflict,
And must submit to Love's despotick Rule ;
Whose Pow'r has caus'd this Transport, and has rais'd
Such ardent Raptures as o'erwhelm my Soul.
I now could give up Empire, Honour, Life,
And all for thee.

ILDERGERTE.

These Sallies are unusual
To your calm, settled Temper, that was wont
To shine serene and bright as Summer Suns,
Glad'ning each chearful Heart about thee :
But now some heavy Cloud of black'ning Care,
Eclipses much that Beauty, which by Force
Breaks out in wild Emotions of your Love:
But oh ! whate'er I suffer, do not think
To do an Act, unworthy of *Theodorick* :

THEODORICK.

Oh ! ——— Oh ! ———

ILDERGERTE.

Why that deep-fetch'd Sigh ?
Oh ! tell me thy Heart-wounding Anguish.

H

TH

THEODORICK.

Not for the World wou'd I torment thy Soul
With that dark Thought.

ILDERGERTE.

Perhaps some Treachery
Of State, is now the Cause of all thy Grief;
And you think me incapable to give
Advice: Then pray unburden all thy Soul,
In the kind Bosom of some faithful Friend:
When Sorrow finds a Vent, it loses half
It's Weight, and Friendship aids us to support
The rest.——Then none I think more true than *Harold,*
Whose sage Advice, may prove a healing Balm,
And baffle all the Arts of subtle Foes.

Enter MESSENGER.

MESSENGER.

Harold desires to be admitted.

THEODORICK.

Why this Interruption? My Order was
To be alone.

MESSENGER.

He says 'tis of the last Importance, and
Nearly concerns your Majesty.

ILDERGERTE.

I beg you'll see him?

THEODORICK.

Alas you know not
What you ask.——You cou'd not bear to hear——

ILDERGERTE.

I would withdraw.

THEODORICK.

You must not go, (let him be admitted)

(Exit Messenger.)

I do not care to see him now alone.

ILDERGERTE.

My Lord, excuse me, I have Business,
And must retire.

Heav'n

Heav'n send his wish'd-for Counsels take Effect,
And calm thy Soul to Peace.

(*Aside.*
(*Exit.*

S C E N E II.

Enter HAROLD.

THEODORICK.

What means this ill-tim'd Suit? or wherefore is
Thy Business? Have you found a Way, that now
May break th' impending Ruin, and avert
The threat'ning Storm?

HAROLD.

What Art or Diligence could do,
I've done: Last Night obey'd your Orders,
Dispatch'd a Courier with all Secrecy,
To sign the Treaty and conclude the Peace.

THEODORICK.

Then thou hast made a Wretch of me, indeed:
Is this thy Friendship, this thy boasted Love?
Such Service should be paid: For thou hast ruin'd
With thy officious Haste, thy Friend and Master,
And plung'd him deep in Misery and Despair.

HAROLD.

Whence flows this sudden Change? My Duty bid
me
Obey the Orders of my sovereign Lord.
Did not yourself command your Slave to do it?

THEODORICK.

Seek not to find Excuse, you have abus'd
Authority; because when almost in
The Pangs of Death, you did extort Consent
To the Divorce, thy Malice has made use
Of *that*, to seal my Ruin.

HAROLD.

Then I find
That my mistaken Zeal has prov'd my Crime,
And I must pay the Forfeit of my Error,

H 2

With

With my Life's Blood. Behold I bare my Bosom,
 Now rip it up, and search my inmost Heart,
 You will not find one Spot or Blemish there,
 That can corrupt my Faith, or taint my Thought
 With base Designs, or traiterous Deceit.

THEODORICK.

Were I thy Equal, I would now thrust home.
 But it would be a Stain to Royalty,
 To take so poor a Trifle, as thy Life.
 A Monarch's Vengeance scorns to stoop so low.

HAROLD.

Now you despise me, 'tis not worth my keeping;
 Nor do I value Life, since your Displeasure
 Has render'd me incapable to serve you.

THEODORICK.

Preserve me, Heav'n, from such officious Servants,
 Whose Friendship's Ruin, and whose Love's Destruction.

Thou'st done thy worst: But if you'd save yourself,
 Hasten hence, and send a Messenger to stop
 Th' Express, before the News can reach the Queen.

HAROLD.

Alas! I fear it is too late: — His eager Haste
 Ere now has brought him near the *Swedish* Camp.

THEODORICK.

Then I revoke my Mercy, and you now
 Shall die. — Yet hold — I will forbear; this Sword's
 Reserv'd for nobler Executions. — Who waits?

(*Enter Officer.*)

Hasten, hasten this Instant, and o'ertake th' Express,
 Or follow to the Camp, and bring back his Credentials.

(*Exit Officer.*)

HAROLD.

Perhaps in some Degree I am to blame,
 And vainly thought to prop this sinking State;
 Tho' all my Policies untimely were.
 If I've offended, 'tis unwillingly,
 And my curs'd Stars conspire to work my Ruin.
 Thou would'st not, sure thou would'st not, cut me off,
 Without Repentance; lest my injur'd Shade

Ne'er

Ne'er rest, to think I dy'd with a hard Thought
Of thee, my once-lov'd Lord.

THEODORICK.

Dost thou complain?
If e'er you hope to appease my kindled Wrath,
Acknowledge now your Crime, and prostrate kneel
Before the Queen: There seek thy Pardon; there
With strongest Oaths confess, 'tis thy curs'd Error
Hath wrought this dire Mistake.

HAROLD.

This is a Favour
I am unworthy of; for she's endowed
With all Compassion, most divinely gracious,
Like Heav'n, bestowing Mercy and Forgiveness.
But let me beg you, (if I dare to hope)
You'll not appear to aggravate my Crime:
Secure of that, I need not fear the Treaty. *(Aside,*

THEODORICK.

So far I will comply on your relenting:
For I have Business of the greatest Moment,
And must retire a while, to rack my Brain
With working Thoughts, how to escape this Danger:
Soon with our Troops to the Castle I'll repair,
To raise the drooping Strength of that important Fort.
There your Return I'll wait: Bring you her Answer.
(Going.

HAROLD.

Heli I'll soon instruct to bear Conditions. *(Aside.*
(Returns.

THEODORICK.

But hear: I charge thee to preserve strict Watch,
That *Osmin's* Life be safe 'till farther Orders.
Now will I swage this Conflict in my Soul,
Nor *Swedes*, nor Rebels, shall my Power controul:
By some important Act, my Country I'll redeem,
Preserve my People's Love, and *Ildergerte's* Esteem.
(Exit.

HAROLD.

Now, 'tis too late, I'll soon secure the Queen.
(Harold takes up the Dagger, and passes the Stage.

SCENE

SCENE III.

Enter BELIZA, JULIANA.

JULIANA.

Madam, there goes your Father, shall I call him,

BELIZA.

No ; I would shun him, for he will not hear me.
 Oh! whither shall I go, or whither fly,
 Where hide me and my Miseries together,
 Where shelter me from a loath'd Husband's Pow'r,
 And hide me from a Parent's cruel Frown?

JULIANA.

Dear Madam, cease those Tears : Oh, let me beg
 You'll moderate your Grief, and be of Comfort,
 For Time may work an unexpected Change.

BELIZA.

Talk not of Comfort ; there's no Change for me :
 For my whole Life is one continued Scene
 Of Bitterness and Woe : — Oh, I have Cause
 To curse my Being, and that fatal Day,
 Which gave me Life : Since each revolving Hour
 Is pregnant with new Miseries, and flows
 With a fresh Tide of agonizing Grief.
 Have I not brought my *Osmin* to Destruction.

JULIANA.

'Tis true, the Letter, which you drop'd, has giv'n
 Some Villain room to forge the blackest Treason,
 And foster it on *Osmin* : But consider,
 'Twas not your Crime, but Fortune that ordain'd it.

BELIZA.

Alas, you idly talk, unknowing what I feel.
 Why was I born to be the fatal Author
 Of all these Mischiefs? or, why live I now
 To see him perish by the dark Intrigues
 Of envious Courtiers, and dissembling Villains?
 Why was I dragg'd to this accursed Marriage,
 But to preserve him, yet he now must die :

Death

Death shall not be so cruel, as to leave me
Behind, here in a World of Woe; and glut me
With unnumber'd Sorrows.

JULIANA.

Oh, do not give your self thus to Despair:
Much, much, I fear some fatal Resolution.

BELIZA.

Indeed, I am resolv'd they shall not glory
In this their Conquest. — *Osmi*, when thou art gone,
They ne'er shall triumph o'er a Part of thee;
I will attend thee thro' the Milky-way,
And glide thro' Fields of liquid Lights, where Crouds
Of happy Lovers will conduct our Steps,
To Mansions of all Extacy and Bliss.
But, oh! Behold the Tyrant-Husband comes,
And Means to lord it o'er me at his Will.

Enter HELI.

HELI.

Madam, why do you sullenly withdraw,
To cast a Gloom, and damp the genial Flame,
That *Hymen* has so lately lighted up?
For cold Neglect is all I have from thee.
Is this the Treatment for the nuptial Day?
Are these the Joys to crown a Bridegroom's Wishes?

BELIZA.

In vain you seek for Joy; from me 'tis fled,
Nor will it ever visit where I dwell:
Wou'd you have found me kind, you shou'd have
woo'd me
With soothing Tales of Love, 'till you had won my
Heart.

But you provok'd my Father's Wrath against me;
The nuptial Knot by forc'd Constraint was ty'd,
And I by Violence became thy Wife.
Now all the ghastly Train of conscious Horrors,
Haunt my perplexed Soul for broken Vows:
Then where's the Happiness you can expect
From such a Bride; For my afflicted Soul

Has

Has cause to curse the Hour I first beheld thee:

HELI.

Since thus you treat me with Disdain and Scorn;
My Rival shall not glory in your Hate:
Your Father, Yester-night gave full Directions
*Of*min should die to Day: And I go now
To see them executed. Perhaps you may
Be humbl'd in his Fall; for while he lives,
No Duty I expect, from an imperious Wife.

BELIZA.

Know, Tyrant, I despise thy Threats already:
Has not thy inhuman Treach'ry wrought my Ruin?
The Measure of my Woes is now so full,
That you can add no more. No Power on Earth
Shall ever force me to be thine. In vain
Has Ceremony join'd us, if the Heart
Consent not; then I am not yours. In vain
The Priest pronounc'd us one, and gave my Hand;
For mutual Hearts alone can knit the Band:
But since hard Laws have made me now thy Wife,
I'll free me from this Bondage with my Life;
To break the Marriage-Chain, I'll chearful die,
And to the Arms of Death for Refuge fly. *(Exit.)*

Enter HAROLD.

HAROLD.

My Son, with great Impatience, I again
Have sought thee. Why stand you coldly musing thus?
At length the lucky Minute is arriv'd,
And our important Business calls you hence.

HELI.

My Lord, I now am thinking what I've done:
I know not whether I may call you Father;
Beliza now has vow'd she'll ne'er be mine.

*(Sohemus enters unseen, and withdraws to the
End of the Stage.)*

SOHEMUS.

Beliza is not here:—I'm wrong inform'd.
These two in private talk: I like it not;

Haply

Haply 'twill be of use to learn their Bus'ness.
I'll conceal my self, as yet they have not seen me.

(Withdraws.)

HAROLD.

Away :—It is a Trick of willful Woman,
And conscious Vows hang heavy on her Mind,
Which *Osmin's* Death will soon erase. Then stay not,
But haste to cut this hated Rival off,
Ere that the King's Command be known, for he
Has now forbid his Death till farther Orders.
This is the Crisis of our Fate, nor must
We lose one Moment : I now go to try
The Queen, and bring her to our Wishes, nor fear
An Interruption ; for the King's this instant
At the Castle, and must be taken by surprize :
But first let *Osmin* die. I have not Time
To tell the rest : You know what's to be done,
And let it be with speed.

HELI.

And swift as thought
I'll fly, for wreaking Vengeance wings me on :
Yes ; I'll revenge me on this hated Rival,
And draw my Sword with double Wrath and Fury,
Hate and Ambition to each Blow adds Weight,
And now *Theodorick* shall meet his Fate,
Now will I take Revenge before it be too late.

(Exeunt severally.)

SOHEMUS.

'Tis well : Their dark Designs shall come to light,
And all their Treach'ry be at length discover'd. *(Exit.)*

(Scene changes, and discovers Ildergerte in a pensive Posture ; a Book in her Hand. Attendants waiting.)

ILDERGERTE.

Leave me : I would amuse my self with reading.
If *Harold* comes, let him Admittance find.

(Exeunt Attendants.)

And sure, he'll bring me Words of Joy and Comfort,
That he has heal'd the King's distemper'd Mind,
And quieted his Care.—In these sweet Hopes
I will indulge a while, and try to calm me,

I

If

If my dim Sight will let me read. For Tears
 Have sunk my Eyes within their hollow Orbs.
 Ay, here I left off.—“A Man that’s wife and good
 “Is proof against all Accidents of Fate.”
 (Wou’d I were so :) But how does he proceed.
 “A wise Man carries all his Store and Treasure
 “Within himself: What Fortune gives, she takes;
 “But he has nothing that can make him fear her.
 “He firmly keeps his Ground against all Evils,
 “Without so much as changing Countenance.
 “He’s free, inviolable, and unshaken,
 “And proof against all Accidents of Fate.”
 Ah! *Seneca*, ’tis now I find thy stoick Lesson
 Is much too hard for Mortals Practice.
 For while our Nature is endued with Sense,
 Corroding Grief will make us feel its Sting:
 For still these briny Drops will force their Way,
 While they’re supply’d by a fresh Spring of Sorrow.

Enter HAROLD.

HAROLD.

Why does the Fairest of her Sex withdraw,
 To hurt those Eyes with weeping, whose bright Light
 Makes you e’en lovely in your Tears that shine
 Like spangl’d Dew against the Morning Sun:
 Then let not canker’d Grief prey on your Bloom,
 Which Nature has so lavishly bestow’d.

ILDERGERTE.

In vain bestow’d on me, since I have lost
 The Power to please: Oh, had I all the Graces
 Which, Poets sing, adorn’d the Queen of Love,
 Without regret I could resign those Charms,
 Unless they would secure the Heart of him,
 For whom alone I’d wish to live.—If thou
 Hast Pity, now interpret all his Thoughts;
 Oh, heal my wounded Soul; convince me he’s
 Not false, nor I th’ Occasion of his Woe.

HAROLD.

Some heav’nly Power instruct me how to charm

Thy

Thy troubl'd Soul to Peace : How gently steal
My Words on thee, that they ne'er reach thy Heart,
T' alarm thy Fears by this ungrateful Message.

ILDERGERTE.

What means this formal Prologue and Harangue?
How do I tremble? Now my Fears are Prophets.

HAROLD.

Know you this Dagger?

ILDERGERTE.

Oh! too well I know it.
It is the King's. Then do not rack me thus
With horrid Thoughts, but let me know the worst.

HAROLD.

Believe me: This unwilling Office has
Disarm'd each Sense; nor know I to begin.
Thou God of Eloquence, inspire my Tongue
With more than mortal Art of Speech: Soften
Each sharp and cruel Word of this harsh Sentence;
Take off from ev'ry keen and piercing Accent
The cruel Edge, that no rough Sound may grate
Her wounded Ear, or shake her tender Frame.

ILDERGERTE.

These forc'd Delays are cruel and unkind.
Then speak; oh, quickly speak; while yet my Fears
Give Life to hear thee.

HAROLD.

I have always judg'd,
The King most fond and covetous of Beauty;
But thought your heav'nly Form had long since blest'd
him

With such Abundance, he could wish no more.
Yet love of Change misleads his wand'ring Heart,
That he now sighs for poor unripen'd Charms:
The Princess *Rosalinda* soon he means
T' espouse; the adverse Winds alone oppose.
As for the Queen—— (*During this Speech Ildergerte
seems more and more concern'd till she sinks down.*)

Oh, spare me to relate,
With what a fiery haughty Mien, he curs'd
The hated Object of his Vows, and bad me

Hasten to execute his stern Command :
 But, oh ! I never, never can obey
 His cruel Will. Then urge me not to tell,
 But guess the fatal Purpose by the Dagger.

ILDERGERTE.

'Tis done :

He has now struck my Heart without its Aid. (*Faints.*)

HAROLD.

She falls ! What have I done ? — What must I do !
 If now I call for Help, I fear all's lost.
 My Soul ! My Life ! My Queen, now hear me speak ?
 Thank Heaven she now revives again.

ILDERGERTE.

Who calls ?

My Love, my Lord, my Husband, *Theodorick* !
 Oh ! no ; you are not mine. I am forsaken ;
 Most cruelly forsaken : Why then come you
 Thus to torment me ? I can bear no more.

HAROLD.

'Tis not the King ; but one that can revive
 Thy dying Hopes with Happiness and Comfort.

ILDERGERTE.

Alas ! that is a vain and idle Dream,
 To lure me back to this most hated Being.
 Oh, raise me not ; here let me rather lie,
 Here humbly in the Dust. — Here rest for ever,
 A most forlorn, unhappy, joyless Wretch.
 Here on the Bosom of the friendly Earth,
 Here take thy long Repose, nor add new Weight
 To all thy grievous Miseries by thinking.

HAROLD.

Despair not yet : Thou art not void of Help :
 For I will be thy Refuge and Defence.
 Then cease this mighty Grief ; nor shed those Tears
 For one, that is unworthy of your Virtue.

ILDERGERTE.

Vain is thy Promise to redress my Wrongs : —
 You can't restore his Love, his Faith unbroken.
 Cruel as he is, for Pity bear my Weakness :
 Oh ! Let me now pour out my wounded Soul ;

'Till

'Till my griev'd Heart do burst, with frequent sighing,
I'll fly to Death to free me from my Woes,
Then in the silent Grave I'll rest forgotten.

HAROLD.

Wou'd you thus gratify a Tyrant's Wish,
And yield thy Charms a Sacrifice to Death?
Such Gifts the Gods ne'er meant should be neglected,
But gave thee Beauty to command thy Fate,
Rule o'er our Hearts, and make Mankind thy Slave.

ILDERGERTE.

Could'st thou conduct me where to find my Peace?
(For, oh! 'tis sure I want it) then——oh, then!
Harold, thou then would'st be my Friend indeed.

HAROLD.

What then but Love drowns ev'ry anxious Thought,
And softens all our Care? 'Tis Love that gives
Immortal Pleasures here below, makes all
Our Senses know delight, and ev'ry Pow'r
Dissolve in Bliss.——Then give thy Sorrows o'er?
Now taste his sprightly Joys, and yield thy Heart
To Love and me. Here will I shield thee from
This cruel King, protect thee with my Life.

ILDERGERTE.

Is it for me to hear thee talk of Love?
Oh, cruel! Do'st thou come to mock my Mis'ry?
Oh! *Harold*——hast thou too——conspir'd a-
gainst me?——

Then am I lost indeed!——and now must sink
Beneath a heavy Weight of grievous Wrongs.

HAROLD.

'Tis for thy Wrongs my Soul took fire within:
And now I'm ready to defend thy Cause,
Wou'd you forsake the King. Then hear my Council:
Rouse up thy Friends to aid, and join with me;
Nor will I slacken my just Rage and Fury,
'Till thy repeated Wrongs are all reveng'd.

ILDERGERTE.

Traytor, no more: Thy vile dissembling Arts
Are all too gross: Th' insatiate Thirst of Empire,
And curs'd Ambition prompts you to Rebellion.

Is this thy boasted Friendship to the King?
Or me? For in his Ruin you but seek
To reign, and vainly think to make me fall
An easy Prey to your unbridled Will.

HAROLD.

Bear witness, Heav'n, how falsely you accuse me.
My Interest has no share in't: You alone
Fill all my Soul.—Is my fond Passion then
A Crime so great, as ne'er to meet Return?

ILDERGERTE.

Never from me:—Thou base unmanner'd Slave,
T' insult thy Queen with loose dishonest Love.
Presumptuous Villain! Hence, and quit my Presence.
But know, thou vile Ingrate, tho', by the King
Forsaken, still have I Power to treat
Thy Insolence with Scorn, and punish this audacious
Crime.

HAROLD.

Vaunt not too soon, nor triumph in thy Scorn:
For know, proud Beauty, thou'rt no more a Queen.
You and your Life are now within my Power,
And Love's the only Ransom for your Safety.

ILDERGERTE.

Hear this, ye heavenly Guardians of the Righteous,
If Justice, Truth and Honour be your Care,
Avenge my Cause upon his guilty Head,
And guard my Virtue from this Tyrant's Fury.

HAROLD.

In vain from Heaven Assistance you invoke,
For it's regardless of your fruitless Prayers;
Since your Perverseness brings your Ruin on,
And supplicating Friendship has no Power
To move thee, for you still persist to rack me
With all the Pangs of disappointed Love:
Then think, 'twas you first taught me to be cruel.
Behold this Arm is ready to direct
The deadly Blow.—Then cease to urge thy Fate.
This Hand has Power to bid you live or die.

ILDERGERTE.

Thou Monster, Satyr, or something yet more vile,
For

For which I want a Name. — Here take my Life :
For know, that now I utterly despise it :
Since I must hold it at the Mercy of
So base a Wretch as thou.

HAROLD.

Since thus thy Hate
Contrives to rob me of thy lovely Charms,
Then know, I will not give thee Power to die :
Death shall not feast upon those Beauties, which
Long I've design'd to give me Joy : And thou,
Reluctant as thou art, shall aid my Transport.
For I will sport and revel in thy Charms,
And rifle all the Spoils of captive Beauty.
I've Guards that wait my Orders to secure you,
'Till I've more Time and Leisure for my Purpose.
Thus in my Arms I'll bear you hence by Force.

*(Offers to take hold of her, and drops the Dagger,
which she catches up, and stabs him.)*

ILDERGERTE.

But thus, kind Heaven has arm'd me with Defence.
Now all the Business of my Life is done,
And I will end it here.

(Offers to stab herself.

(Harold falls.

(A Clashing of Swords without.

*Enter OSMIN, with his Sword drawn, and Guards,
catches hold of her Arm.*

OSMIN.

Heavens! prevent the Blow.

ILDERGERTE.

Off, off, thou Traytor! — For by all my Wrongs,
(That can give Vigour to a Woman's Arm)
This Dagger now shall reach my wounded Heart.
Oh! tardy Hand — thus to betray me! — Sure
I am of Heav'n forsaken! — What, all these
Armed against me! — Ah! 'tis *Osmin*! — Nay,
Is *Osmin* too become my Enemy? —
Oh, faithless Men! — Undone! undone for ever!

OSMIN.

OSMIN.

I am your Friend ; and let me now support you :
 Rage and Despair have hurry'd all thy Soul,
 But I am come to aid thee : Think thou art
 Not lost, but art just Power's peculiar Care,
 And guardian Angels ever hover round thee,
 To watch thy awful Virtue in Distress.
 What dire Disaster's here ? — What, *Harold* slain ?

HAROLD.

My Soul impatient has not yet took Wing,
 It now is fleeting on the Verge of Life ;
 But unrepented Sins retard it's Flight.
 Let me unload it here : Own all my Guilt,
 To make some Reparation for my Crimes ;
 And tell thee now, 'twas I that form'd this Plot
 Against thy Life : — 'Twas I betray'd the King,
 To give Consent to this unjust Divorce :
 And thought, by that, (accursed as I am)
 To ruin this great Pattern of her Sex.
 I can no more, Death hurries me away.
 Oh, save me, save me from his dreadful Horrors.

(Dies.

OSMIN.

Why weep you thus at your Deliverance ?

ILDERGERTE.

It is too much of Joy, too much to bear.
 Oh, let my Tears have Way : Nor choak their Pas-
 sage,
 Or this so sudden Change will quite o'erwhelm
 My Soul, and sink me in the Shades of Death.
 But is the King yet safe, from Danger free ?
 Oh, leave me now, and fly to his Assistance.

OSMIN.

'Twas not long since I heard the King was safe.

ILDERGERTE.

But say, how came you here ? Oh, let me know ?
 That I may praise the just and righteous Pow'rs,
 For all the Wonders they have wrought : — For no-
 thing

But the immortal Power, this female Arm

Could

Could strengthen, to destroy this daring Tyrant.

O S M I N.

Sobemus aided my Escape: I found
His generous Soul was with Compassion touch'd
For all my Sufferings: To him I trusted
My deep Concern, to him communicated
The secret Anguish of my Love-sick Soul.
Mov'd with the mournful Tale, he kindly promis'd,
That I once more, and soon, should see *Beliza*,
And went to let her know th' appointed Hour,
That she might safely to the Prison come:
But missing her, he then by Chance o'erheard
This fatal Plot: At which he set me free.
With these few Guards I flew to your Assistance:
While he with others went to guard the King,
Who was retired to view his Forces Strength,
Where Rebels hemm'd him close within the Castle-
Walls:

And should *Sobemus* want my Aid, I've yet
Another chosen Corps, ready for th' Onset,
Who only wait the Signal.

I L D E R G E R T E.

Still my prophetic Soul presages Evil,
From those harsh Words that dying *Harold* spoke.
He said, the King had giv'n Consent to part:
Then what can free him from this second Choice,
Which dashes all my former Bliss with Gall.
Oh! that our Joys shou'd never flow sincere,
But with the hidden Seeds of Grief be mix'd,
Which soon grow up, and shadow all our Bliss.

O S M I N.

Avert the Omen, Heav'n! It cannot be:
For sure the King will ne'er forsake such Virtue.

I L D E R G E R T E.

I'll not indulge a hard Thought of the King,
But much the Consequence of his Refusal
I fear, which may imbroil us more in War,
And you well know how much we want a Peace;
Which for a Nation's Good, cou'd I restore,
My single Self were then not worth a Thought,

K

To

To save a Land from Blood and Desolation.
 Here in the Face of Heav'n I vow, for me, (*Kneels.*
Theodorick shall ne'er give up his Country.

O S M I N.

Doubt not then, fairest Pattern of all Goodness,
 But Heav'n has endless Bliss for thee in Store.
 What, tho' our Life's beset with Toils and Care,
 'Tis but a Foil to try our Virtue here ;
 For all our Struggles there's a sure Reward,
 And Heav'n itself vouchsafes to be our Guard,
 It looks with Pity on our past Distress,
 And we are doubly paid with Happiness.
 The Signal's given Heav'n grant our Arms Suc-
 cess.

(*Flourish.*
Exeunt.

The End of the Fourth Act.

ACT

ACT V.

SCENE I.

SCENE *the Street, before the Queen's Apartment.*
A Crowd of Citizens, &c. in a tumultuous Manner as-
sembled, some crying, Long live King THEODORICK,
and Queen ILDERGERTE; others crying, Long live
King THEODORICK, and Queen ROSALINDA.
(Flourish. Shouting.)

Enter GUARDS, &c.

OFFICER.

HASTE to your Homes, you idle Rabble: A-
 way,
 Or I will use the King's Authority
 More closely to confine you.

OMNES.

We are not Rabble, we are Citizens.

OFFICER.

Shame to your Occupations! Idly thus
 To roam, neglecting your domestick Callings,
 Unwittingly to mix in the foul Sink
 Of vile Sedition; away, lest it should taint you!
 A Citizen's a just and worthy Member
 Of th' public Weal, to which he should devote
 His Service, and not useles cast himself aside.

CITIZENS.

Most worthy Captain, we are loyal Subjects,
 And come to grat'late the King's Life and Safety,

K 2

His

His near Escape from this Day's dangerous Plot.

(*Flourish and shout.*)

OFFICER.

Room for the King.

1st. CITIZEN.

God blefs his Majesty.

2^d. CITIZEN.

Nay, prefs not fo upon me——Stand far off.

OFFICER.

Stand back —— Room —— Bear back.

(*Flourish.*)

Enter THEODORICK, OSMIN, SOHEMUS, GUARDS, &c.

THEODORICK.

Osmin, receive mine and the People's Thanks,
For Victory doth still attend thy Arms,
To blefs thy Country, and exalt thy Fame.

OSMIN.

For the Success, I give my King the Joy,
Who equal liar'd the Danger and the Conquest.

THEODORICK.

Mention it not; to you I'm much indebted,
As at our private Interview I own'd:
But thy great Actions shall have publick Honours.

OSMIN.

I beg my Sovereign would not think of it,
For worthy Actions are their own Reward.

OMNES.

Long live *Osmin*, long live most noble *Osmin*!

1st. CITIZEN.

Brother Cit, we've once more seen his Majesty safe,
Let us go drink Peace, and the King.

2^d. CITIZEN.

Ay, Peace and the King,
No Hostility, no Hostility!

3^d. CITIZEN.

No Faction, no Faction!

OMNES.

Long live King *Theodorick*. Huzza! (*Excunt* Citizens.

The

The SCENE closes.

THEODORICK, OSMIN, and SOHEMUS come forward.

THEODORICK, to an Officer in waiting.

Set up our Standard, that our Friends from Foes
we may distinguish— (Exit Officer.

Just Heaven to us, as yet, hath been propitious,
By this Day's Work, Rebellion's Head is crott,
Heli, by *Osmine's* Sword, sent to the Shades.
Yet, Hydra-like, Rebellion still starts forth,
And stares me in the Front with bold Defiance.
As here I pass'd, I mark'd the People's Faction,
Tho' most of their seditious Leaders are cut off:
Yet in this peaceful Interval I'll seek
My *Ildergerte*, and crown the Toils of War
With lasting Union, and perpetual Love. (Going.

Enter MESSENGER, meets THEODORICK, and delivers
Papers.

MESSENGER.

Most sov'reign Lord, your Credentials I bring back,
But *Hermanfroy*, impetuous, breathes Revenge:
Vows *Rosalinda* now no longer waits
The Issue of your slack Resolves: This confirms
Th' unhappy Tidings, that the *Swedish* Fleet,
With their spread Sails, are riding in our Channel.
(Exit.

THEODORICK.

I will not long be brav'd by haughty *Swedes*;
My *Ildergerte* has Power to bid this Arm do Wonders,
From her I will receive the sacred Mandate,
That leads me on to Death, or certain Conquest.
(To *Osmine* and *Sohemus*) Generals, at our Command,
be ready to attend. (Exit.

OSMIN.

Unhappy Prince! he knows not what dire Conflicts
He

He has to conquer : For the Queen already
Has vow'd her Love a Victim to her Country's Cause,

SOHEMUS.

Amazing ! Say you, is the Queen determin'd ?

OSMIN.

She's resolutely fix'd on this Divorce,
And her heroick Virtue nobly shines,
Denmark to cheer in this apparent Danger.
What, tho' thy noble Genius did destroy
This black Conspiracy, some Rebel Chiefs are fled,
Exulting much at this design'd Invasion.

SOHEMUS.

Small Share *Sobemus* claims in this Day's Work,
Left I be deem'd a Bragger for *Theodorick*.
Our King most bravely mov'd his Way thro' Ranks,
Whom dire Despair had fix'd on Death, or Conquest,
But yet had fall'n a Sacrifice, had not
Your needful Aid come timely to assist him,
And scatter'd with dire Dismay the Rebels rally'd
Troops.

Ev'n generous Minds, with Wonder, were transfix'd,
To view the mighty Act, thy Sword perform'd,
Since you alone had Reason to decline
The general Cause.

OSMIN.

Private Griefs should ever
To publick Good give Way ; each honest Heart,
Whene'er his Country calls, should find a Sword.
True, in my Cause, the King has been mistaken,
Yet, let it now be buried in Oblivion,
For he has made Atonement : You by Chance
Were absent at our Meeting : Had you seen,
With what Concern he did approach, desired me
His Treatment to forgive, it must have mov'd you.
Abash'd to see my royal Lord thus sue,
A burning Blush o'erspread my Cheek, and his
With equal Ardour glow'd, whilst Grief and Friend-
ship
Alternately did flow, and in his Eyes,
Might all the Struggles of his Soul be seen.

Then

Then gladly wou'd I once more draw my Sword,
To serve the King, and ease his tortur'd Mind,
Tho' now the Event appears most doubtful.

S O H E M U S.

Since your great Courage, that was never wont
To be dismay'd, foresees th' approaching Danger,
I judge it were not safe, now to proceed in War :
But do you think that *Ildergerte*, our Queen,
Could bear to part ? Banish herself from Court
To live an Exile ? When the King, with all
The Ties of ardent Love, implores her Stay.
Here all her Flame will kindle up a-new ;
And Love, you know, will break all Bounds, throw
down

The strongest Fence, that firm Resolves can make.

O S M I N.

No : I believe she's fix'd as Fate, has weigh'd
With equal Scales our Danger and her Love ;
Our Evils too, too plain the Queen foresees,
And let's a Nation's Int'rest rule her honest Heart.
Thus Care still drives forth Love from off the Stage,
As if 'twere not the Bus'ness of our Lives :
Prison, and Chains, have kept me in Confinement,
Too long from my *Beliza*, and my Toils
Have length'ned the Delay : But I'll hast hence,
And at her Feet, atone this long neglect ;
Then should my Soul again be rous'd to Arms,
Then would I fly with new inspired Ardor,
And with our Swords take Vengeance on our Foes.

S O H E M U S.

Peace, like a frighted Dove, that's long been chac'd
By furious Birds of Prey, at length, to her
Most welcome Mansion does return ; but while
The hostile Bird remain'd in view, sweet Love, and
Native

Gentleness, were Strangers to her Breast :
Beliza now may think on Love, and you,
Since her stern Father, Death has well remov'd,
And you've cut off your formidable Rival.

O S M I N.

OSMIN.

My Rival! Who?

SOHEMUS.

Heli, as he lay mangled
Amidst the Slain, did with his dying Lips
Confess, that he was wedded to *Beliza*.

OSMIN.

Is she then false?—She is—I read it in thy
Look.

Then let me hear no more, for I am curs'd enough.

SOHEMUS.

Yet hear me? No Joys did then attend on *Hymen*:
Great is her Grief; her Father, with vile Pretensions
false,

To save your Life (tho' soon he aim'd to take it)
Forc'd her to this most cruel, hated Contract.
Now Night and Day incessantly she raves,
With Horrors that wound deeper than an Evil
Conscience.—But see! *Beliza* comes this Way,
And looks o'ercharg'd with Woe: Forbear one Mo-
ment,

And you perhaps may hear the mournful Tale.

SCENE II.

OSMIN, SOHEMUS, BELIZA, and JULIANA.

JULIANA.

Dear Madam, go no farther: you're too weak to
bear it.

BELIZA.

Yes, I will on; (support me with thy Arm,)
I cannot die in Peace 'till I have seen him;
Seen him!—Alas, he is no more!—But I
Will seek his breathless Corps—Oh! lead me 'till I
find it,

Then lay me down to rest for ever.

OSMIN.

My Impatience will let me hear no more. (*Aside*.
Behold thy *Osmi*n.—

BELIZA.

BELIZA.

Oh, save me *Juliana* from his injur'd Shade!

(*Beliza sinks in her Arms.*)

OSMIN.

Oh! Let not Grief o'ercome my dear *Beliza*,
Thy *Osmin*'s Love shall dissipate thy Woes.

BELIZA.

If thou'rt his Ghost, I pray thee wait one Moment
And I'll attend you to your sacred Mansions.

OSMIN.

Sure she raves!—'Tis *Osmin*, 'tis thy *Osmin*.

BELIZA.

Ah! 'tis surely he!—'Tis *Osmin*! 'tis he himself!
None but that well-known Voice could stay my Soul.

OSMIN.

Then say, thou charming Maid, art thou still kind,
To bless thy *Osmin* with thy tender Love.

BELIZA.

Now my cold Blood can't warm my Cheek, and
Death

Without a Blush, will let me own I love;
But to what height my feeble Eloquence
Can't tell: Then let my dying testify
My constant Passion.

OSMIN.

Oh Heav'ns! What said my Love?
Dying!—Or did my Ears deceive me?—Oh!
—No:

The faded Roses of thy Cheek too plainly shew it.

BELIZA.

Yes, the friendly Draught begins to work its Office,
And ev'ry stiff'ning Limb will soon be frozen:
Heli then may resume me for his own,
A Clod of Clay, that can no more resist.

OSMIN.

Cruel Draught!—

Heli's no more:—

Misery, in short'ning Torments, ne'er 'till now
Was cruel; oh! that with arbitrary Sway,
Her Date she'd length'ned, some few bitter Moments,

L

'Till

'Till we had reach'd the Goal ;
Now *Heli* has no Power to make thee his.

BELIZA.

Then am I thine again? —
O take me to thy Arms? —
But will your Charity extend so far,
To pardon a poor Wretch that has betray'd you.

OSMIN.

Some evil Genius did deceive thy Mind ;
I know thou did'st not willingly give up
Thy plighted Faith, to torture a poor Wretch
That loves thee : Some Fiend has wrought this Mis-
chief,
Therefore I will not blame thee ; these last Moments
Are too, too precious, to waste them in Upbraidings.

BELIZA.

Oh, happy Sound! — My *Osmín* does forgive.
That's calm'd my Soul. — Farewel, I go in peace.
(Dies.)

OSMIN.

Yet hear me? — I've a thousand Things to say.

SOHEMUS.

Alas, she's gone ! Those starry Eyes have lost
Their Light, and all her Beauties fade : How pale
The Coral of her Lips, divested of the Breath
That us'd to warm them.

(Throws himself down by her on the Floor.)

OSMIN.

Then leave me not behind :
Oh stay! — thou gentle Spirit, stay ; — impatient
Angels hurry thee too soon.
See ! she soars — (Rises wildly, offers to fall on his
Sword.)

Thus will I free my Soul, to mount and follow
That bright Track.

SOHEMUS.

What means thy frantic Rage ? (Wrests his Sword
from him.)

OSMIN.

Oh ! I'll pursue my Love :
Cruel, you're not my Friend to stay me now :

You

You shall exert no Power,——I will depart.

SOHEMUS.

This Way let me lead you——

Some Friend will I procure to watch, till your
Returning Senses, shew you're safe from Danger.

Nor would I leave you in Distraction thus,

But that the King Commands me to attend him.

(Exit Sohemus leading off Osmin.)

JULIANA.

Alas, how wan she looks!——How much unlike a
Bride!

'Tis thus; when cruelly we're forc'd to wed,

That sure Destruction waits the Marriage-Bed:

When Avarice or Ambition make us join,

Then Children suffer for their Parents Crime.

Ah, *Beliza*! Thy Vows of Love are paid indeed!

(Weeps.)

Enter ILDERGERTE.

ILDERGERTE.

What, poor *Beliza* dead! 'Tis of a-piece

With the Calamities of this dire Day.

Where'er I tread, Mis'ry attends my Steps,

And leads me to the Place of Horrors.

What was the Cause of her untimely End?

JULIANA.

A deadly Draught she drank to heal her Cares,

To shelter her from a loath'd Husband's Arms,

And 'scape the Wrath of a most cruel Parent.

ILDERGERTE.

She ill-deserv'd this Fate: Heav'ns forbid,

That I should load the Children with the Fathers Crime.

Remove her hence, and see she's decently interr'd.

(Scene closes.)

There was a Time, I cou'd not lose a Friend

But must have wept, and now *Beliza*'s Fate

Might claim a tender Tear; hard Sorrow sure

Has drain'd the Sluices of my Eyes, and Misery

Inur'd my Heart against Impression:

A stupid Weight hangs heavy on my Soul,

L 2

Now

Now my *Theodorick* is lost for ever,
 And yet I do not weep! ———
 Sure Heav'n has now seal'd up my Senses, that
 I should not feel this cruel, mighty Blow.
 But oh, ye gracious Powers!
 Conduct me thro' this fiery Trial?
 Instruct me how to sooth *Theodorick*
 To this bitter parting? ——— But see he comes. ———
 Oh Heav'ns, I'm Dumb! ———

THEODORICK, *as entering.*

What have you learnt? ———
 Is the Signal plac'd to give us Notice.

SCENE III. THEODORICK, ILDERGERTE, &c.

OFFICER.

Your Majesty's Commands are all obey'd.
 From off the Beach, the *Swedes* large Fleet appear'd
 Of late; and judg'd to be but few Leagues distant;
 The crouding Populace soon took th' Alarm,
 And cry'd their only Hopes were in the King.

THEODORICK.

Is this to be a King? To be the Atlas
 Of a whole Nation; and support the Burden
 Of State, for others to enjoy, while ev'ry
 Wish and Purpose of my Soul is cross'd.
 Ah! my dear *Ildergerte*, dost thou too shun me?
 Else why thy Eyes thus rivetted to Earth,
 And fix'd, as tho' you were become a Statue.
 Oh! thou wrong'd Excellence, (might I dare to hope)
 Could you forgive me the unwilling Forfeit
 Of your Love, and now again receive me
 To your Heart, then to the Field with Joy
 I'd go, and take just Vengeance on thy Foes.
 Then all ye Powers bear witness, with what Zeal
 Impatient I shall wait the coming Danger,
 That must decide this our important Quarrel.
 And here I swear, by yon bright Heav'n I swear,
 No force of Arms shall ever wrest thee from me,

Theodorick

Theodorick will resolutely die,
 Thy faithful Husband, and the King of *Denmark*.
 Then say!—Thou art my Oracle—Oh quickly then
 Declare my Fate,---Ha!--not speak!--Too plain I see
(here both stand silent for some time.)
 Thy cruel Silence doth pronounce my Doom.
 Still art thou dumb, and only with thy Sighs,
 Upbraid'st me with thy Wrongs? Alas! too justly.

ILDERGERTE.

Oh! I have not the Power of Utterance.
(Alas!--You do not see the Danger.)
 Grief struck me dumb---Oh, our too-wretched State!
 A State intolerable in our Separation;
 Yet cruel Fate has left no other Choice,
 Unless the Authors of a ruin'd Land.
 Then do not wound me more, by censuring hard,
 Nor think that I would load thee with Reproaches,
 Or add Afflictions, to the Pangs you bear.
 For all the Woes you feel, my wounded Heart
 Rend more, than do my own; and Grief redoubles
 Upon me with thy Sorrows.

THEODORICK.

Ah, can you then forgive?
 Do you then share in all my Woes and Pain,
 Thus pity the Distress of one that has so wrong'd thee:
 Oh, matchless Proof of wond'rous Love!
 What have I lost in thee!
 How curs'd is my Condition,
 Thus to be depriv'd: Had Nature made you
 Less fair, or kind, you could not thus have mov'd me.
 Or had Heav'n fir'd thy Soul with fierce Resentment:
 Then might my rougher Passions be alarm'd
 To smother out this Tendernefs, but now,
 Oh! judge how deep you've pierc'd my Heart;
 When thus in vain I strive to stop these Tears,
(Wipes his Eyes.)
 Which now in big round Drops do scald my Cheek;
 And know, before *Theodorick* weeps, his Heart must
 bleed.

ILDER-

ILDERGERTE.

Weep not for *Ildergerte*, who is not worth
A Monarch's Thought in Balance with his Kingdom.

THEODORICK.

Cease, *Ildergerte*, these cruel and unkind
Evasions.——Oh! you little know
The Terrors of my Mind, or tortur'd Soul,
Or you could not torment me thus——Ah! cruel
Fair one! You once were kind and tender;
My Life dwelt in thee, and the Time was sweetned
With all thy Charms: How have I bless'd each Day,
Thy Conversation did beguile with Bliss,
And heighten all thy Beauty?——Oh, I have gaz'd
With Wonder, and hung over thee enamour'd.
Alas, those racking Thoughts! (that their Remem-
brance
Now could die) they waken ev'ry tender Passion
And rend my Heart-Strings with their poignant An-
guish.

ILDERGERTE.

Ah! Woe is me to see this Day!——
My Tears must choak me.

(Aside.

THEODORICK.

Then hear me, hear me;
Oh! turn not from me:
My *Ildergerte*, have you no Sense of what I feel?

ILDERGERTE.

Upbraid me not with such Unkindness:
The livid Paleness of thy Cheek, and trembling Lips,
All, all declare the Hurry of thy Soul:
And shew thee now become a Prey to Grief,
And black Despair —— If dire tumultuous Passions,
Can thus the Soul of great *Theodorick* shake,
O think what I, a poor weak Woman, feel:
See how my Bosom heaves and pants with Agony,
Oh! now my Heart beats strong, to resist this Weight
Of Woe, that with such rapid Force, now drives
Upon me, and discovers all my Miseries,
And Horrors I should feel in losing thee.

Forfaken

Forfaken and forlorn, defenceless I might roam
For rest, when none would pity a wretched Woman's
Tears.

THEODORICK.

These dire Afflictions ne'er shall reach my *Ildergerte*.
I will this Instant to the Field. ——— (Going.

(To an Officer in waiting.)

Bear our Command to *Osmine*,
That he be ready to attend us.

ILDERGERTE. (Catches hold of him.

Now am I calm again.

Oh, yet stay a Moment ;
Let me not rashly then give up my Country ;
For *Denmark* now I every Passion yield.

THEODORICK.

And would my *Ildergerte* indifferent part
With a cold Thought, without one tender Tear ?
(Oh, what a Wretch art thou, *Theodorick* !)
Yes, I have wrong'd thee, basely thou'st been insulted ;
And you with Justice now might spurn me off :
But yet with greater Zeal, no Traytor ever
Pleaded for Mercy ; no creeping Slave, tho' e'er
So penitent, can have a more relenting Heart :
Thus at thy Feet I would atone the Wrongs
I've done thee ; thus I'll ever cling and hang upon thee ;
Nor will I ever quit my Hold, until
Thy Heart I move with soft Compassion.

ILDERGERTE.

Alas, I cannot see you thus : My Tears
Must now find vent. ——— Oh ! let this briny Torrent
Witness my Tenderness : For oh ! believe me,
You are as near as ever, to the Heart
Of *Ildergerte*.

THEODORICK.

Thus on my Knees I would implore you.

ILDERGERTE.

O rise ! ——— *Theodorick* must not thus be prostrate.
O think, in Time's fair Annals, how many
Bright Examples there shine forth, that voluntary
Life

Life resign'd, and chearful dy'd for their dear Country.

THEODORICK.

Cato ne'er bore the *Romans* greater Love :
For *Denmark's* Good, my Life I'd freely yield :
Death has no Terrors like my leaving thee ;
The Grave is a sweet Refuge from our Woes,
But my fierce Agony's a lasting Wound.

Enter SOHEMUS.

ILDERGERTE.

Sohemus, why look you thus dismayed ?
What Tidings bring you ?

SOHEMUS.

Beliza's Death has much distracted *Osmin*,
That his unsteady Brain no more can guide
His Sword victorious, to serve the State.

THEODORICK.

Oh, Loss indeed !——
Beliza's Death to cause such Loss !

ILDERGERTE.

Poor *Beliza* at length has laid her Sorrows down :
Would I were so at rest ! (Aside)

THEODORICK.

Yet, I will not be dismay'd.
Sohemus, bid the Officers, To-night,
Within the Town, to lodge their Companies :
Let *Decius* be prepar'd to meet us,
And bring *Licinus* with you instantly,
Ere setting Sun.—— (A low Alarm.
Hark, what Alarm is that ? (Exit Sohemus.)

Enter MESSENGER.

Why stare you so with wild Amaze ?

MESSENGER.

My sovereign Lord, the *Swedes* are landed now,
Like clustering Hornets, swarm along the Shore ;
And

And swarm so thick, they blacken all the Coast.
To our Standard no *Dane* repairs; the few
Our Colours had drawn there, doth now desert,
Or else with Looks aghast, like the neglected
Ensign, stand the Monument of dire Dismay,
And all the gathering Crowd now cry aloud for Peace.

THEODORICK.

By far more gentle's the hoarse Raven's Voice,
O'er the dread Mansion of the dying Man,
When he, by that dire Omen's warn'd to yield,
In Height of youthful Blood, to th' untimely Grave.

ILDERGERTE.

All Things to an end are brought by arbitrary Time,
Each disconcerted Scheme now works, to point out
Peace,

(And sure such hidden Instincts are from Heav'n!)
And Fate still leads to fix the Crisis of our Parting.

THEODORICK.

Ye Pow'rs, to cross me in this Exigency!

ILDERGERTE.

Tho' hard's our Lot, (yet let us not of Heaven
Complain, who best knows why the Fates deal thus.)
And hard for me, that must be torn from all
My Soul holds dear! — And yet I cou'd not bear
To drag thee headlong with me into Ruin;
For you were born to prop a sinking State,
To be the Father of your native Country,
To bless a Nation, and make Thousands happy.
And unless *Denmark* from Violation can
Be freed, my pious Vows to part are heard.

THEODORICK.

Ha! is't possible! Have you then vow'd to part?
By this dear Embrace —
By my trembling Heart, that beats with a strong
Charge of Love to hold thee here — By all the Tor-
tures

That now distract my Soul, I ne'er can rest,
'Till that long Tract of Time be spent, when we
Shall meet above. —

M

But

But here eternally could stay, to take
My last Farewel——Yet never bid Adieu.

ILDERGERTE.

Then cease, my dearest Lord, since 'tis the Will of
Heav'n,

No Nation e'er was scourg'd, but for it's Crime,
Nor e'er redeem'd, but by indulgent Nature.

THEODORICK.

O thou eternal and unerring Mind,
Conduct me thro' this Maze!——
For I am wounded fore on every Side.
Ha! what Noise without!

(Alarm.

(A Cry without.

Shut, shut the City Gates!
Draw up the Bridge!
What, will you let them enter?

THEODORICK.

Heav'ns! have the *Swedes* surpriz'd us!

ILDERGERTE.

Is't possible! Hark!——

WITHOUT.

Away, secure the southern Gate!
Up with the Chains! (A louder Alarm.
Is the Town asleep?
Ring, ring th' Alarm Bell. (The Bell rings.

Enter MESSENGER. (A confused Noise without.

MESSENGER.

All's lost! The *Swedes* are at the City Gates,
And by an Herald, imperious *Hermanfroy*
Demands an Audience of our King *Theodorick*,
Says, for Conditions long he need not to stay;
For in one Hand, he *Rosalinda* brings,
And in the other, bears the 'vengeful Sword.

THEODORICK.

So sudden!——Were the Out-Guards plac'd?
By which Way did they march?

MESSENGER.

The Out-Guards warily they escap'd, and left
The beaten Road, thro' Fens they made their Way,
Quite

Quite cross the southern Plain, their eager Haste
Caus'd much Confusion on their March, but now
In order they're drawn forth, before the southern Gate.

THEODORICK.

Our Orders bear, (that we may yet consult)
Haste to that Gate, and bid them there hang out
The Flag of Truce.

ILDERGERTE.

What means my Lord?

THEODORICK.

My *Ildergerte*, I would still friendly try,
If on more easy Terms they would withdraw
Their threat'ning Pow'rs.

ILDERGERTE.

Vain to indulge such Thoughts, they ever.—
But see who comes! O my portentous Fears!

THEODORICK.

Sobemus, in such breathless Haste!

Enter SOHEMUS.

SOHEMUS.

Speak,

Speak, sov'reign Lord, or our devoted Walls
Are destin'd to Destruction: *Hermanfroy*
Has once again renew'd his haughty Message;
Declares, that Time he will not waste with Treaty,
And on no other Terms than first propos'd,
Will Quarter give:—

But more I fear, if we let Time elapse,
The Rebel Faction will to th' haughty *Swedes*
Our Town betray, or open set the Gates.

THEODORICK.

Is not our Flag of Truce hung out?

SOHEMUS.

I cannot say:

I did not wait the Arrival of your Orders;
For when I heard the threat'ning bloody Summons,
I speeded fast away, before the *Swedes*
The Rebels Courage could revive by storming
Of our Walls.

THEODORICK. (*Striking his Breast.*
Denmark!—O! still art thou here?
 Who waits?

Enter OFFICER.

Haste, haste, this Instant, with a Trumpet haste
 To *Sweden's* King, and let him know that we
 Accept his hard Conditions, and will meet
 Him soon upon the southern Plain.

(*Exit Officer.*

(*To Sohemus*) Send for your Troops, *Sohemus* I can
 trust;

To guard my *Ildergerte*, from this great Outrage.

(*Sohemus goes out, and returns.*

ILDERGERTE.

Think not on me—But haste to stop this Ruin.

THEODORICK.

I'll soon depart, (but grudge not these few Mo-
 ments)

O *Ildergerte*, thou'rt the bright Ray that points
 To Virtue, has taught me what th' Almighty
 Power requires: Then think, oh think, nought but
 The healing *Denmark's* Woes could rend me from
 thee.

O *Ildergerte*!—Oh say you do not hate me!

ILDERGERTE.

What need, my Lord, to ask me that? when this
 Great Act would even warm a Stranger's Heart,
 Command their Love, and claim their high Esteem.

THEODORICK.

Must I then leave thee!—This parting does so
 Awe my Soul, I cannot take—Oh! (*Going.*
 And yet I cannot go. (*Returns.*

One last Embrace—And thus—and thus—

Farewel— (*Embracing.*

For still—I can't pronounce that fatal Word.

For—oh—let this speak for me.

(*Turns away, and weeps.*

My *Ildergerte*!—farewel—Once more farewel.

ILDERGERTE.

For ever! (*Aside.*) How I tremble; Heavens sup-
 port me!

T H E

THEODORICK.

Since you've denounc'd my Doom, I must away---

(Going.

But oh, my *Ildergerte*! amidst the Hurry (Returns.
My Soul is in, I had forgot: Oh! let me
Ask one Thing more, that you will now and then
Bestow a Thought on one that doth adore you,
Tho' an unhappy King?

ILDERGERTE.

Where'er thou art,
Thou still art present with me, and will never
Be absent from my Heart, 'till Death shall draw
The Veil, to shade thy Image from my Thoughts.

THEODORICK.

Accept my Thanks, tho' mean Return for all this
Love. (A low Sound of a distant Trumpet.

ILDERGERTE.

That distant Trumpet sounds the fatal Mandate.

THEODORICK.

Then must I go?— (Going. Returns
Pardon me,—I should have done.
But one Word more.—O let me beg you would
Not think too hard of me.

ILDERGERTE.

Alas, my Lord,
We do not part for that.

THEODORICK.

That Thought strikes hard!

ILDERGERTE.

Indeed, I did not mean it.
But oh!—alas, I know not what I say.
Tho' I'm bewilder'd, still, will still remember
You are *Theodorick*.

THEODORICK.

Oh, my injur'd *Ildergerte*!
Oh, my bleeding Country!

ILDERGERTE.

Think, think of that!
Still, still remember you're *Theodorick*.

T H R-

THEODORICK.

Without another Thought this Gulph I'll shoot.
To leave you thus, I plunge in endless Woe,
To save my Country, I all Happiness forego. (*Exit.*)

ILDERGERTE. (*After a Pause.*)

Art thou gone?—

Like boist'rous Seas this raging Storm employ'd
My hurry'd Soul, and bare my Spirits up;
But this last Blow!

Thy Arm, good *Sohemus*? (*Rests on his Arm.*)Oh, *Sohemus*, all my Senses fail.—

Is it not Death?—For sure 'tis wond'rous like it?

Now the cold Sweat hangs thick upon my Brow;

And ev'ry Object's misty grown, and dances

In my Sight;—My smiting Knees no longer

Will support me---O---- (*Faints.*)

SOHEMUS.

Who's there to help the Queen?

Enter WOMEN.(*They lead her to her Chair.*)1st WOMAN

Alas, she's chang'd!

Enter MESSENGER.

SOHEMUS.

If thou'rt the Messenger of Ruin, Stop thy Tale,
Since here's the Master-piece of Misery. (*Points to the*

2^d WOMAN.*Queen.*

My Lord, she breathes.

ILDERGERTE.

Oh, *Theodorick*!--Where art thou?---*Rosalinda*!--Where is she?---

MESSENGER.

Madam, she's dead.

ILDERGERTE.

Ah!--dead!--is't possible?---

Thou hast rous'd me!----then speak thy wond'rous
Tale!

MESSENGER.

Soon as the Herald had proclaim'd the Terms,
That *Rosalinda*, henceforth should be Queen,
That you your Lord resign'd, to save his Country,
She

She cry'd, you merited a better Fate,
And should know *Rosalinda's* Soul, disdain'd
T' accept the Man, whose absent Heart was in
The full Possession of another Fair.
She bade the Herald once again proclaim
The Terms, at which the Rabble hail'd her Queen:
'Tis well she cry'd, nobly I am reveng'd:
Then know, ye faithless *Danes*, I'll die your Queen,
Tho' now I scorn to be *Theodorick's* Wife.
This Instrument of Death shall close my Eyes,
Lest my treacherous Heart betray my Reason,
When I behold his once lov'd Form again.
At which she plung'd a Dagger in her Breast,
And sighing, whisper'd soft to *Hermanfoy*,
Then gently sunk into his Arms, and dy'd. (Exit.

ILDERGERTE.

Unhappy *Rosalinda*, tho' thy Death
Has given *Theodorick* to my Arms;
Yet, soft Compassion bids me mourn thy Fate,
Accept the Tribute of a Tear—Henceforth
Be cautious, Maids, how you embark in Love.

Enter OFFICER.

Madam, his Majesty proceeds this Way,
And with him *Hermanfoy* the *Swedish* King.

ILDERGERTE.

Hermanfoy! ——— I judg'd *Rosalinda's* Death,
Had given the King to me, to *Denmark* Freedom?
Oh, *Sobemus*! I fear some foul Event:
Heav'ns! ——— He is here, and we are Slaves.

Enter THEODORICK, HERMANFOY, &c.

HERMANFOY.

Madam, I come not now on hostile Terms,
But at a dying Sister's last Request,
To see this bright Example of her Sex:
Rosalinda, in a Rival Merit could esteem;
And did enjoin me with her dying Lips,
To sheath the Sword of War, that she might strike,
In her most fatal Quarrel, the last Blow,
Desired, your Resignation to her Claim

Might

Might not be paid in vain, for your high Worth,
Had justly bought your Country's Freedom.

ILDERGERTE.

Most noble Sir, if my small Share of Merit,
Were the Occasion of my Country's Safety,
Rejoice I should; with all the Grace of Language
Pay my bounden Thanks, for this most gracious
Compliment; but various Change of Fortune,
By turns hath ev'ry Sense subdu'd, and now
Deprives my Tongue of it's due Eloquence:
Would now your Majesty excuse my Stay,
My fluctuating Mind, when more serene,
Might furnish Words more worthy of your Ear.

HERMANFOY.

As your distracted Mind requires Repose,
Let not the Form of Compliment detain you.

ILDERGERTE.

Lead me to my Chamber, where I may compose,
(*To her Women.*)

The various Passions various Changes made.

(*Exit with her Women.*)

THEODORICK.

Excellent Woman! ——— You may now be happy.
Hermanfoy, Pity, and forgive *Theodorick*:
For now my conscious Thoughts correct me;
Spight of my Love, thy Sister claims this Tear——
She had a Soul, intrepid and commanding,
And was far worthy of a better Fate;
On slight Pretences tho' she had form'd her Love,
(For Love I find will feed almost on Air)
For which, for ever I shall feel Remorse.
Henceforth be banish'd all Deceit from Love,
By idle Tales make not the Fair One wretched;
For Nature will repay their depth of Mis'ry.
On one false Step what num'rous Ills attend,
Which Link in Link, on one long Chain depend:
Our Errors we at length too late repent,
Which timely Caution should at first prevent.



F I N I S.